



A Type Specimen Book

QUICK REFERENCE

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This type specimen book tells the story of Benton Sans. Here you will learn who designed the font, its original intended purpose, its design characteristics, historical influences and context as well as examples of the font in use.

EXCHANGE RATES

Benton Sans was designed by Tobias Frere-Jones based on drawings of News Gothic by Morris Fuller Benton from 1908. The main difference between the two is that the regular weight of News Gothic is thinner than the regular weight of Benton Sans.

NEWS GOTHIC

Regular, 8 pt

BENTON SANS

Regular, 8 pt

Below is a comparison of both fonts using a sentence that contains all letters.

News Gothic:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Benton Sans:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

BUSINESS HOURS

Operating hours vary slightly between class periods; see emails for further information on specific days.

VCD 02: Typography 2pm-4:45pm
Mon & Weds

TELEPHONE COUNTRY CODES

To make international calls from West Lake Hall dial 011 and then the number.

CONVERSIONS

Thin

Extra Light

Light

Book

Regular

Italic

Medium

Bold

Black

News Gothic Bold 8 pt
Benton Sans Bold 8 pt
News Gothic Regular 8 pt
Benton Sans Regular 8 pt
Benton Sans Medium 16 pt
Benton Sans Condensed Medium 12 pt



A Type Specimen Book

Dominique DeMoe

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O O O O O
N N N N N
T T T T T
E E E E E
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Tobias

Frere-Jones

In 1992, Tobias Frere-Jones graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design (Macmillan 2006). After graduation, Frere-Jones worked for the Font Bureau in Boston. At the Font Bureau, he honed his design skills and continued to develop typefaces for seven years. Frere-Jones left the Font Bureau in 1999 and went to work with fellow typeface designer, Jonathan Hoefler at Hoefler Type (Macmillan 2006).

Today, Frere-Jones is the founder and lead designer of his own independent type design practice, Frere-Jones Type, as well as one of the world's leading typeface designers. He has designed many recognizable typefaces such as Interstate, Whitney and Gotham.



Cyrus

Highsmith

Type designer, Cyrus Highsmith, graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1997 (Macmillan 2006). Seemingly following in fellow type designer, Tobias Frere-Jones footsteps, Highsmith also began to work for the Font Bureau after his graduation until eventually starting his own type design practice, Occupant Fonts.

Highsmith has won multiple awards and been featured in newspapers and magazines around the world. The designs that Highsmith created have also made an impact on editorial design (Macmillan 2006). It is no surprise that he worked on expanding Benton Sans with the Font Bureau since it is a typeface family that looks great in print as well as online.

Benton Sans is a typeface that has passed the test of time. It was originally designed by Tobias Frere-Jones to be used for the Martha Stewart Living Magazine and website (“Benton Sans”). In 1908, Morris Fuller Benton created the typeface News Gothic (Friedl, Ott, & Stein 1998). Today, the original drawings of News Gothic live inside of the Smithsonian Institute (Blackwell 2004). When commissioned to create a typeface for the Martha Stewart Living Magazine and website, Frere-Jones studied the drawings of News Gothic and gathered much of his inspiration from them. This all began in 1995, then in 2003, Cyrus Highsmith of the Font Bureau, worked to further expand the typeface. Benton Sans is now available for retail use and includes over 100 styles in eight weights and four widths (“Benton Sans”).

1995

PURPOSE

2003

A B C D E
F G H I J K
L M N O P
Q R S T U
V W X Y Z

Benton Sans & News Gothic

When you compare Benton Sans to News Gothic, you are able to see where Tobias Frere-Jones drew inspiration from Morris Fuller Benton. Both, News Gothic and Benton Sans contain stylized Q's and g's (Espiritu). The specific characteristics to note when comparing the two typefaces are shallow descenders, organic shapes, and subtle transitions of stroke width (Espiritu). News Gothic, however, has a tall and skinny height where Benton Sans is short and wide.

Benton Sans is classified as a neo-grotesque typeface and News Gothic is a grotesque typeface. Where grotesque typefaces represent the earliest sans serif typefaces and neo-grotesque typefaces adapted grotesque ones for better legibility.

Ber

1

2

1. Bar sits at vertical center of “e”
2. Rounds are circular
3. Minimal contrast
4. Large x-height
5. Short extenders
6. Wide body
7. Bowl curves down from stem
8. Terminals turn inward

Benton Sans Light 10 pt
Benton Sans Medium 8 pt
Benton Sans Medium 140 pt
Benton Sans Medium 180 pt

nton
Sans

3 4 5 6 7 8

Diagram illustrating the characteristics of the 'nton' and 'Sans' typefaces, showing the letters 'nton' and 'Sans' in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are white on a blue background. Numbered annotations (3-8) point to specific features: 3 points to the top of the 't' crossbar, 4 points to the top of the 'n' crossbar, 5 points to the top of the 'n' stem, 6 points to the bottom of the 'S' bowl, 7 points to the top of the 'S' bowl, and 8 points to the top of the 's' bowl. A horizontal line with diagonal hatching is positioned above the 'n' and below the 'S'.

Spot the *difference*.

NEWS GOTHIC

BENTON SANS

Thinner regular weight

NEWS GOTHIC

BENTON SANS

Leg connects to arm

NEWS GOTHIC

BENTON SANS

Open bowls

NEWS GOTHIC

Stylized g's and Q's

NEWS GOTHIC

BENTON SANS

BENTON SANS

What makes Benton Sans special?

Benton Sans is used on a variety of different mediums and the draw to do so is clear. It works well for body text as well as for headlines and with its large variety of styles and weights, Benton Sans alone can work to diversify bodies of text. In a blog post for Webtype it was stated, “What makes a mega-family valuable is the versatility it provides for fine-tuning hierarchies, getting just the right dimensions, or achieving maximum contrast. For example, the extremes in Benton Sans’ weight spectrum give web designers new flexibility, especially when it comes to display type.” (“Complete Benton Sans, Now on Webtype”).



MARTHA STEWART
Living



Due to its versatility, Benton Sans is now seen in a variety of print and web publications. Originally created for the Martha Stewart Living Magazine and website, Benton Sans can still be seen on both publications. Benton Sans is also the typeface used for the Lonely Planet travel books and website, for the Marvel Studios logo, for Newsweek print covers and for large display and body copy on Fortune magazines (“Benton Sans”).

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Benton Sans

A Type Specimen Book

This type specimen book is one of a series of 14 books designed under the direction of Jordan Kauffman by the VCD 02: Typography students at the University of Notre Dame during the Fall Semester of 2018.

This volume explores the use and origins of the Benton Sans typeface created by Tobias Frere-Jones in 1995 and expanded on by Cyrus Highsmith in 2003. This book has been researched, designed and edited by Dominique DeMoe, a junior, Industrial Design major at the University.

