



Typography

A-Z

a course
introduction



STONE RIVER
eLEARNING

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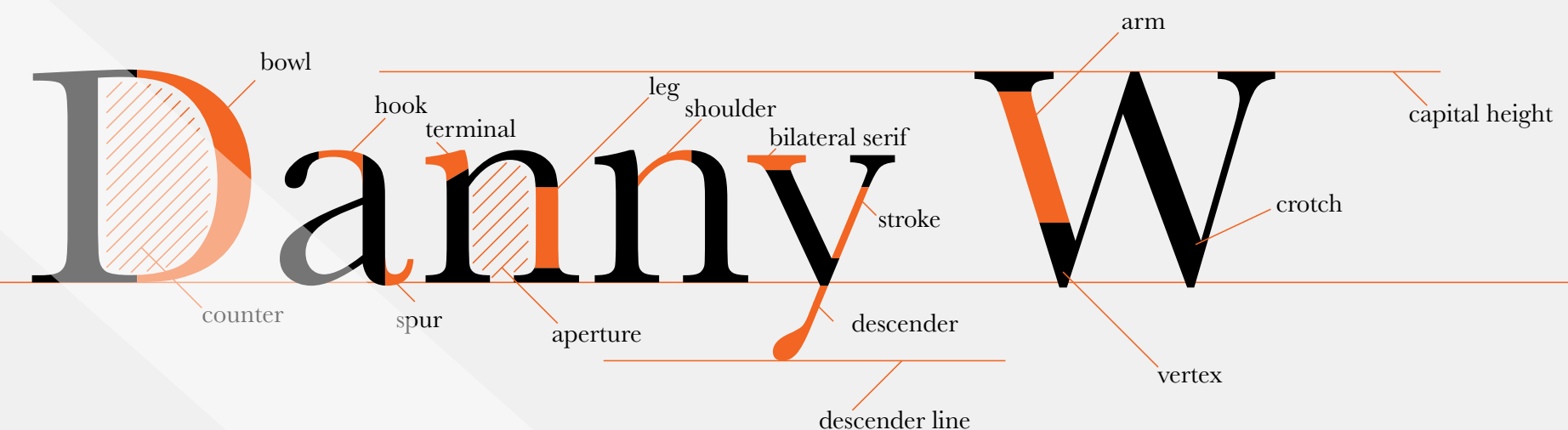
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WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

When we say A-Z, we mean it. We cover just about every corner of the typographic world in this course in one way or another. From basic vocabulary terms, to the psychology and user experience of type, to applying all these skills in the real world. If you are looking for a course that covers all these topics and more, this is the course for you!

THIS INCLUDES:

- an understanding of basic vocabulary terms, such as leading, kerning, baseline, and much more
- a backstory and understanding of the various categories, and how these categories carry with them certain characteristics, 'feels' and histories
- an introduction to various real world examples, from print production to app development and digital publishing



WHO THIS COURSE IS FOR:

This course is made as a beginner - moderate level course. Whether you are brand new to the world of typography, or have been working as a designer for some time, but either want a better understanding of type, or just want a refresher, this course is meant for you.

IT HELPS TO HAVE:

- a basic understanding of Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and/or Indesign. If you only have access to one of these programs you will still be able to follow along with the course, but its ideal to have access to all three
- sketching materials for initial stages of projects (pen, pencil and a notepad should do the trick)

INSTRUCTOR BACKGROUND:

The instructor for this course, Danny Wethern, has had an expansive and wide-spread design career. With roots as a calligrapher and sign painter, typography has always been the core for his passion surrounding design. As a student at the world renown Art Institute of Portland, Danny quickly became a tutor throughout various disciplines in the school, and continued to build his reputation as a freelance designer. His career has led him to work with large corporations, to cities to small family owned businesses.

Long story short, if you need to know something about Typography, your instructor will know the answer.



THE BASICS- KERNING & TRACKING:

Having a firm understanding of the vocabulary surrounding type is by far the best way to start making your text decisions meaningful and calculated. Two of the most common typographic terms are kerning and tracking. Chances are you will be asked to apply kerning fixes more often than you hear / feel the need to use tracking, however both are very useful and handy adjustments to make your type look as good as it should.

The easiest way to distinguish between kerning and tracking is the amount of an adjustment you are making. Kerning is more specific and only effects the space between two letter forms. Tracking, on the other hand, effects an entire word, sentence, or larger selection of text.

KERNING:

individual

hover to apply kerning

before after

Here, the space between the ‘i’ and ‘d’ was the only space that was adjusted. All following characters are also pulled closer as a result

TRACKING:

group

hover to apply tracking

before after

Here, the entire word is selected, and each space is evenly increased (or decreased) as the tracking is adjusted.

THE BASICS- TYPE CLASSIFICATIONS:

Before jumping into the topic of typographic classifications, it's important to distinguish the different categories of classifications (yes, there is more than one).

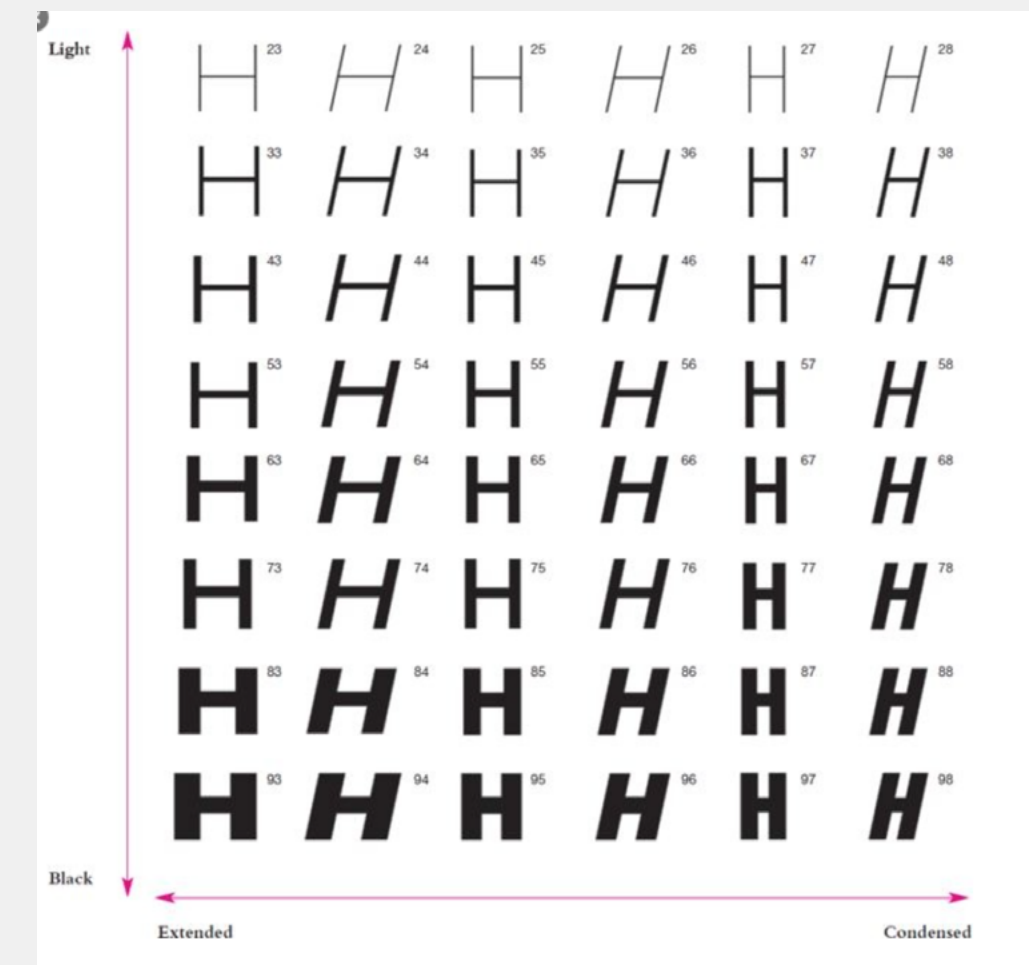
The two most common forms of classification include:

- The Frutiger Scale
- The Vox System

While the Vox system is probably what most people are referring to when they speak about type classifications, it's also important to understand the Frutiger scale.

In short, the Frutiger Scale is a way of determining weight & letter spacing, while the Vox System determines the style/ time period of the typeface.

FRUTIGER SCALE



The Frutiger Scale consists of two numbers. The first number determines the weight, 2 being the lightest and 9 being the heaviest.

The second number determines the spacing, 3 being the most extended, and 8 being the most condensed.

For instance, a 98 on the Frutiger Scale is the heaviest, most condensed font for a given typeface.

THE BASICS- DIGITAL VS PRINT:

It's important for designers to understand the differences between preparing files for print or digital/ web use. Perhaps the most important differences are how typography is rendered. The following are some of the key points you want to keep in mind when designing for either of these spaces.

By far the biggest difference between both of these areas is the size of text that will be considered legible. Although 6 point type is commonly used in the print industry for smaller text like page numbers, index pages, etc, good luck trying to get 6 point type to be legible via a screen.

Another difference worth noting is how to handle 'white text on a dark background'. It's a common way to make a design more interesting / hold a higher contrast by using this method, however if this design is intended for print, it is worth noting that legibility can suffer tremendously if a thin or regular font is used. The way the black ink is printed, the edges can often become slightly fuzzy, and the quality of the print will often suffer because of it. For our screens, no ink means these problems don't come up, so as long as you have a nice dark background, go crazy with that white type!

PRINT

6 points

9-11 points

*51-55
characters*

*be careful-
recommend
using
bold fonts*

WEB

13 points

14-17 points

*44-49
characters*

*Usually
fair game*

smallest
point size

standard
reading size

ideal line
length
(for paragraphs)

white text
on a dark
background?

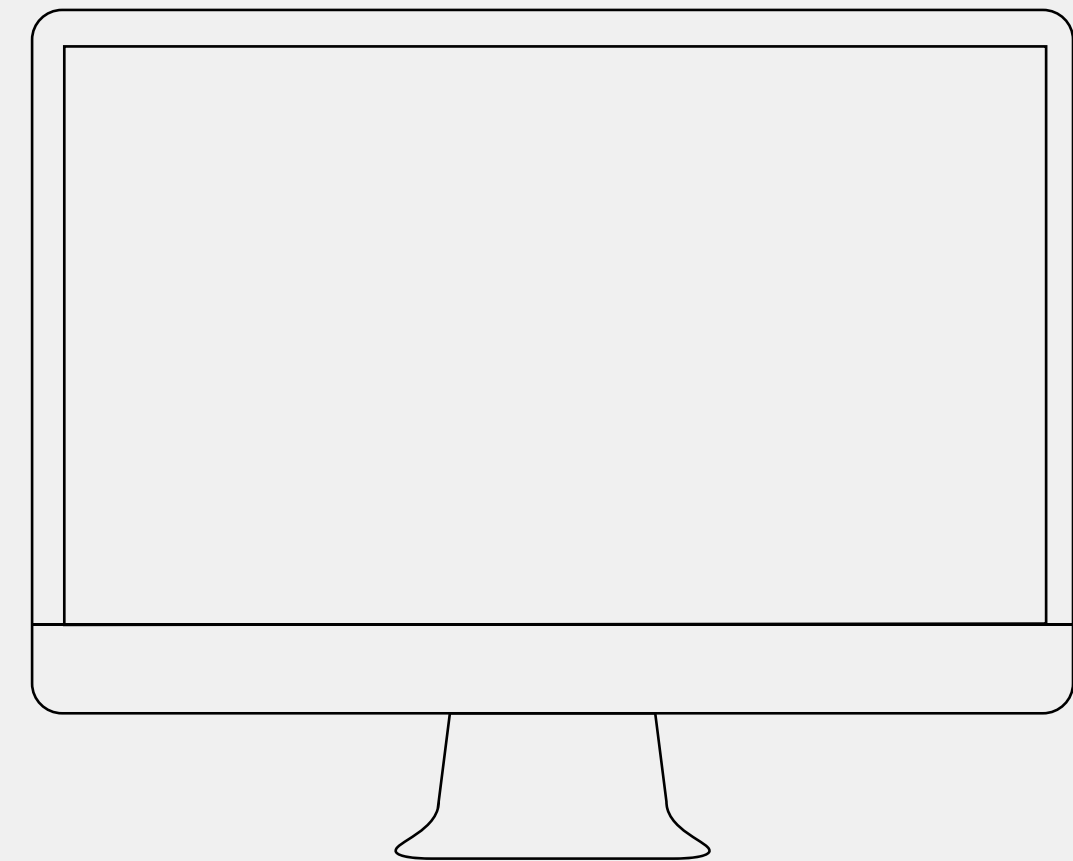
GENERAL TIPS

There are certain things to keep in mind about type that blend across mediums and project types. Feel free to reference the following information as some quick guides to help make your typographic decisions more meaningful.

- Studies suggest that serif typefaces are easier for people to read, so keep that in mind when you're laying out body/ paragraph text.
- Mix 2 or 3 typefaces in a given design to add visual interest and hierarchy. Probably the most common mix is a sans serif typeface along with a transitional, serif typeface.
- High contrast is key to keeping your text legible. In most circumstances, it's best to keep a 50-60% contrast rate between your text and its background.
- A good rule of thumb for leading is 120% of the text size. For instance, these bullets are set to 22 points, which 120% equals a leading of 26 points.
- Centering text should never be used for body copy that takes up more than 5 lines of text. Its been shown to decrease legibility and actually can tire out the reader.

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