



***"Proxima Nova  
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between typefaces  
like Futura and  
Akzidenz Grotesk."***

Proxima Nova's creator Mark Simonson writes that Proxima Nova "bridges the gap between typefaces like Futura and Akzidenz Grotesk." He continues, "The result is a hybrid that combines modern proportions with a geometric appearance." It occupies the design space between geometric and neo-grotesque typefaces.

Proxima Nova was originally released as *Proxima Sans* in 1994. It released with three weights; Regular, Medium, and Black with italics for each. Proxima Nova began its life as a concept sketch of lowercase characters Simonson called *Zanzibar*. During his work as an art director with *Business Ethics* magazine, Simonson was inspired to work on his old Zanzibar concept.

He created *Visigothic* which he later released as Proxima Sans.

Simonson wanted to create something that was plainer than *Gill Sans* yet maintained a modern, geometric character. Since 2005, Simonson has continued to develop Proxima Nova and it now has 1453 characters with support for various languages. It is the most popular paid, commercial font on the internet.

## Weights

Proxima Nova has 8 different weights each with italics; thin, light, regular, medium, semibold, bold, extrabold, and black.

Ubiquitos

Hybrid

Friendly

Plain

Honest

Online

Versatile

Renown

*In 2003,  
Rolling Stone  
Magazine chose  
to incorporate  
Proxima Sans in  
its redesign.*

After the initial '94 release of Proxima Sans, low sales, having a child, and taking on a full-time job at Rivertown Trading Company, Simonson had to put his plans to expand his typeface on the backburner. However, in 2002 Simonson began receiving requests to continue working on Proxima Sans.

In 2003, **Rolling Stone Magazine** chose to incorporate Proxima Sans in its redesign. These events prompted Simonson to re-release Proxima Sans as Proxima Nova in 2005. Proxima Nova now came with 42 fonts; seven weights, and three widths with matching italics. Simonson made many changes to Proxima Sans in order to create the new Proxima Nova.

He created it for the OpenType format and utilised modern typographic attributes such as small caps, alternate characters, fractions, and different figure styles. Simonson was thorough in his preparation for this re-release. He refined every character, remade the italics from scratch, and reconfigured the hinting to improve on-screen performance. Among various other extensive changes including completely new spacing and kerning, Simonson's new Proxima Nova was set to achieve enormous success.

Following this success Simonson was able to quit his other graphic, illustration, and web design work. He has since been solely focused on type design and lettering.

# Influences

Proxima Nova has adapted many different design features of various typefaces.

MRGS

MRGS

The styling of capitals was inspired by American Gothic typefaces, in particular **Copperplate**.

bdnu

bdnu

**News Gothic** inspired the manner in which the curved and straight strokes met.

ESnd

ESnd

Stroke thickness and modulation alongside the lower-case x-height was borrowed from **Helvetica**.

aeg

aeg

Round lower-case letters took design cues from typefaces such as **Kabel** and **Futura**.

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Mark Simonson writes, "I've been thinking about letters and drawing letters for as long as I can remember." Simonson also says that he has always associated certain synesthetic qualities with letters. For example "E" looks to him like a grimace, whilst "a" seems alert. He also cites his father's work as an engineer as directly influencing his interest in design and technical fluency.

Simonson wasn't always a typographer. It took 30 years for him to transition completely to typography. He designed packaging and brochures, worked as an art director, and created lettering and illustration before constructing his first typeface.

However, typography was always there and from his pre-teen years through to college and beyond, Simonson would always sketch and ideate concepts for typefaces. Simonson doesn't regret his late entry into typography. In fact, he writes that his work as a designer intilled in him an understanding of what designers look for in a font. He also came to appreciate that typefaces were tools and not necessarily a means to an end themselves. This open-mind attitude is present within the licensing of his work. There are no restrictions on how and where one can utilise his fonts. Simonson's story paint a passionate typographer and designer, who is truly grateful for his success.

# Languages

Proxima Nova can be set in Latin, Cyrillic and Greek characters.

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

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

ф и с в у а п р ш о л д ь т щ з ь к ы е г м ц ч н я

Ф И С В У А П Р Ш О Л Д Ъ Т Щ З Ъ К Ы Е Г М Ц Ч Н Я

α β ψ δ ε φ γ η ι ξ κ λ μ ν ο π ; ρ σ τ θ ω ς χ υ ζ

Α Β Ψ Δ Ε Φ Γ Η Ι Ξ Κ Λ Μ Ν Ο Π ; Ρ Σ Τ Θ Ω ς Χ Υ Ζ

**NOT**

**THE**

**NEW**

**HELVETICA**





# Widths

Top to bottom:

Proxima Nova

Proxima Nova Condensed

Proxima Nova Extra Condensed

9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

## Special Characters

Simonson has continually extended Proxima Nova over the years which has resulted in many special characters from ligature sets, currency and math symbols, to punctuation marks.

## Standard Ligatures

fb ff fh fi fj fk  
fk fl fl ffi ffj ffl

## Discretionary Ligatures

Rp fb fh fj  
fk fl ffj ffl

## Currency Symbols

\$ ¢ £ ¤ ¥ ¤ ₣  
 € ₣ ₧ ₨ ₩ ₪ ₮  
 € ¢ ₧ ₹ ₪ ₮ ₰

## Math Symbols

$$\begin{array}{cccccccccc} + & < & = & > & | & \sim & \neg & \pm & \times & \div \\ \leftarrow & \uparrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & / & \partial & \Delta & \Pi & \Sigma & - \\ \blacktriangleleft & \blacktriangleright & \geq & \leq & \neq & \approx & \int & \infty & \text{‰} & \sqrt{\phantom{x}} \end{array}$$

## Punctuation Marks

! " # % & ' ( ) \* , -  
? i § « ¶ · » ¿ ¸ ? †  
‡ • … ‰ ‹ › — —

## More Symbols!

| ¨ © ® ¯ ° ´ ˆ ˜ ¸  
 ~ ¨ ´ ¨ ¸ (P) SM TM e ' ¸  
 ✓ ◆ □ ★ ● ▼ ▲ ■ ☞

# Alternate Characters

Proxima Nova has many alternate characters, which are available in 10 stylistic sets. Stylistic sets enable designers and typographers to set alternate characters instantly across a body of text of any size.

Latin small letter for "a" alternative

a a

Latin small letter for "y" alternative

y y

Latin small, capital and small capital letters for sharp "s" alternatives

Sßßß

Figure "one" with serifs alternative

1 1

Latin capital and small capital letters for "G" alternatives

G G G

Latin small letter for "l" alternative

l l

Slashed "zero" alternative

0 0

## In-use

Proxima Nova is often used within body copy. However, as its an extremely versatile typeface, it can be set at large display sizes too.

### 10 on 11pt - Light

In the equatorial constellation of Ophiuchus, a star named RS Ophiuchi about 4,566 light-years away has just had an epic eruption. This nova was so bright that the star is now visible to the naked eye, at a magnitude of around 4.8 – a whopping seven magnitudes brighter than its usual 12th magnitude dimness. Novae are rare enough to spot at the best of times, but what makes this occasion so special is the rarity of the star. RS Ophiuchi is what is known as a recurrent nova – a star that erupts periodically – and only 10 of these stars have ever been discovered in the Milky Way. RS Ophiuchi typically erupts every 15 years or so. Its last nova was in 2006, so the new burst is right on

### 12 on 13pt - Regular

In the equatorial constellation of Ophiuchus, a star named RS Ophiuchi about 4,566 light-years away has just had an epic eruption. This nova was so bright that the star is now visible to the naked eye, at a magnitude of around 4.8 – a whopping seven magnitudes brighter than its usual 12th magnitude dimness. Novae are rare enough to spot at the best of times, but what makes this occasion so special is the rarity of the star. RS Ophiuchi

### 16 on 18pt - Semibold

In the equatorial constellation of Ophiuchus, a star named RS Ophiuchi about 4,566 light-years away has just had an epic eruption. This nova was so bright that the star is now visible to the naked eye, at a magnitude of around 4.8 – a whopping seven magnitudes brighter than its usual 12th magnitude dimness. Novae are

### 51 on 60pt - Bold Italic

***MAGNITUDE!***

### 59 on 70pt - Extrabold Italic

***ERUPTION!***

### 90 on 110pt - Black Italic

***BOOM!***

THE

SPACE

BETWEEN

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**Purchase Proxima Nova and other  
typefaces by Mark Simonson at:**

**marksimonson.com**

