

Anatomy of

TYPOGRAPHY

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Learn your A-Z

search here.

A₁

B₆

C₉

D₁₁

E₁₂

F₁₃

G₁₄

J₁₅

K₁₆

L₁₇

S₂₂

T₂₇

V₂₈

X₂₉

aperture

The opening or partially enclosed negative space created by an open counter.



apex

The uppermost connecting point of a letterform where two strokes meet; may be rounded, sharp/pointed, flat/blunt, etc.

2



arc of stem

A curved stroke that is continuous with a stem.



3

ascender

A portion of the font that ascends beyond the height of a character.

4

h



5

arm

A horizontal stroke that does not connect to
a stem on one or both ends.

bar

The horizontal stroke in characters A, H, R, e, and f.





i

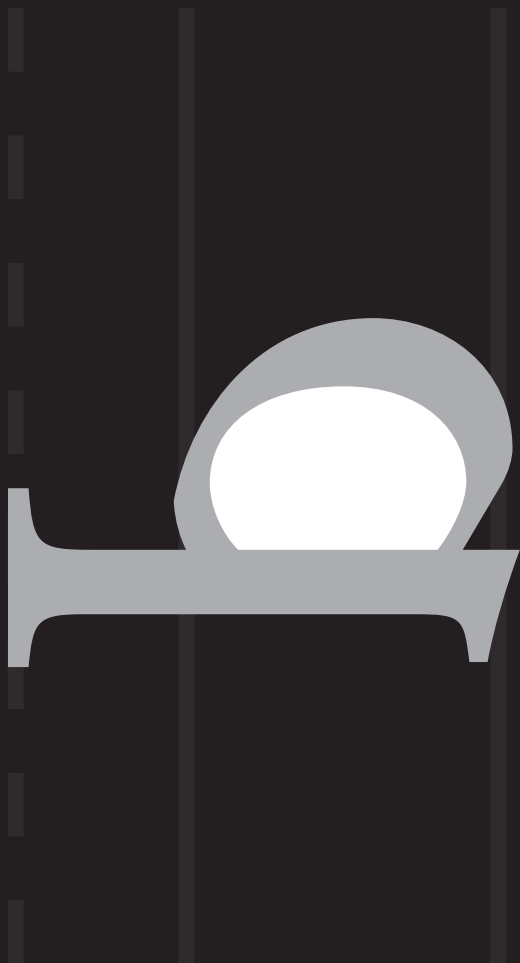
baseline

The horizontal alignment of the base of the letters.

bowl

A curved stroke
which creates
a counter.





counter

The partially or fully enclosed space within a character.



cross stroke

A line that extends across/through the stem of a letter.

10



11



descender

The part of a character that sometimes descends below the baseline, typically in a g, j, p, q, y and sometimes i.

12



ear

The small stroke that projects from the top of a lowercase g.

foot

The part of the stem that rests on the baseline.

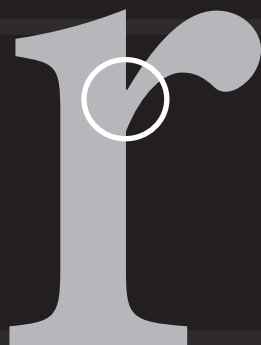


14

ct

gadzook

The embellishment that connects the two letters in a Ligature.



15

joint

The point where a stroke connects to a stem.

kerning

The distance between letters in a word.

16

d i s t a n c e



The diagram shows the word "distance" in a light gray font. Below the letters, there are white brackets indicating the spacing between them. A bracket is placed under the 'd' and 'i'. Another bracket is placed under the 's' and 't'. A third, longer bracket is placed under the 'a' and 'n'. Finally, two small brackets are placed under the 'c' and 'e'.

17

["I have dug my way
out the ground
with palm and fist many times
my whole life has been
one burial after another
i will find my way
out of you just fine "

leading

The distance between the baseline of one line of text to the next.



k

18

leg

A short, descending stroke on a letterform.

ligature

Two or more letters that are connected to form one character; primarily decorative.



f

19

line length

How many characters fit in a line before you return to the beginning.

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

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20

loop

The lower portion of the lowercase g.

21



serif

The projections extending off the main strokes of a character. Sans serif literally means 'without' Serif. Serif-based fonts have been known to help people read faster since the shape of the word is better defined in printed form but not in necessarily on a screen.

F

23

m

shoulder

The curved stroke of the h, m and n.



swash

A decorative extension or stroke on a letterform or
can demonstrate with an entire word.

stem

The main straight, vertical stroke in a letter (or diagonal when there are no verticals).

25





q

stroke

26

A straight or curved line that makes up the bars, arms, stems and bowls.

terminal

27

The end of any stroke that doesn't include a serif; includes ball terminals (circular in shape) and finials (curved or tapered in shape).



vertex

The point at the bottom of a character where two strokes meet.

28



x-height

The height of lower case letters of a typeface, without ascenders or descenders.



29

t h a t i s i t.

NOW
you know your ABCs

