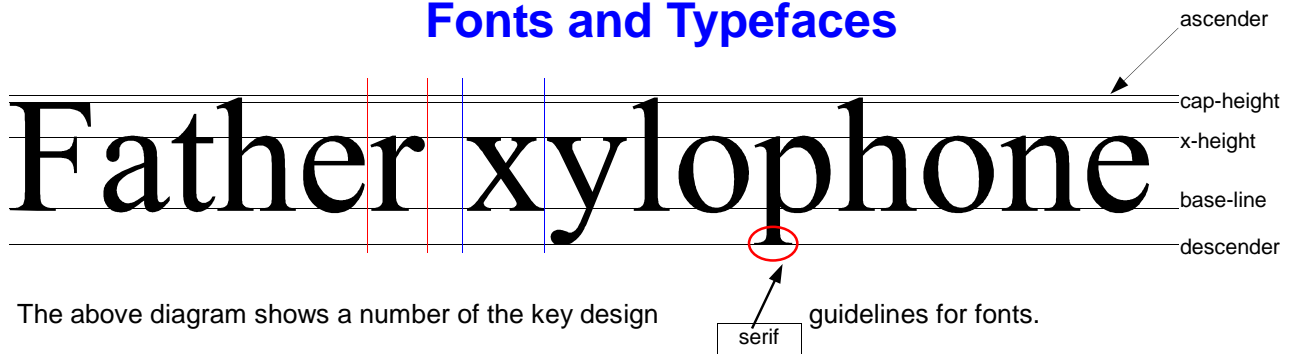


Terms and Definitions

Fonts and Typefaces

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The above diagram shows a number of the key design guidelines for fonts.

A **font-family** is a **typeface** or set of characters based on a specific design. The font-family may include variants on the specific type design, but are variations only in form to enhance the flexibility of using the font-family. Well-known font-families include: Arial, Times New Roman, Helvetica and Times.

A **font** or **style** refers to a specific implementation of a typeface/font-family. For example; Arial is a font-family, or typeface created by the company Monotype. *Arial Italic* is a font or style within this family that is distinct and based on the same principles of design for Arial Regular. Common font variations from the base design, styles, are regular/normal, **bold**, *italic*, **bolditalic**. The term style is not commonly used by font-designers but is used by people used to word-processors on microcomputers.

The most common measurement of a font's size (often a measure of the distance between the 'descender' and 'ascender' lines) for microcomputer users is the '**point**', or point-size. The point is defined as 1/72 of an inch. The point has become the defacto measurement standard because of its adoption by graphical computer user interfaces such as the Macintosh OS and Microsoft Windows. Although it does not fit well into the 'metric' system it does have inertia (historical and current use). Typesetters and font designers use other measurement standards including '**pica**' but the '**point**' system is the most common measure for a font size.

Fixed space versus Proportionally spaced. A 'fixed spaced' font uses the same horizontal spacing for each letter. In the diagram above, it is noticeable that the letter "x" occupies more horizontal space than the letter "r". Fonts designed to give more space to letters requiring more space are termed '**proportional**' fonts, while fonts designed to use the same amount of spacing are termed '**fixed spaced**' fonts.

Ascender

The part of a letter such as b, d, f, j, k, l that sticks up above the x-height.

Descender

See also ascender, x-height Parts of letters such as g, j, p, q, and y that fall below the baseline.

Layout

The arrangement of type and graphic elements on a page to best advantage.

Leading

Also known as line spacing. The spacing between baselines of lines of type. Correct leading is a key factor in readability, generally the more leading the better in body type, but reduce it in all caps headlines.

Ligature

Two letters written or printed as one character. Used in some European typesetting e.g 'a' and 'e' joined to produce a combined character 'æ'. These characters are usually accessed with escape sequences from DTP programs.

Pica

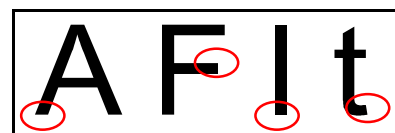
See also point. The traditional typographer's unit of measure, There are 12 points to the pica and six picas to the inch. This is giving way to millimetres in the modern DTP world, but some designers still specify line lengths in picas.

Point

The traditional measure of a typeface size. There are 72 points in one inch. In the hi-tech digital/metric world this measure has remained. Those who delve into postscript programming will find that all measurements are defined in points.

Sans-serif

See also serif. Typeface designs designed with out finishing strokes or serifs. They have straight stems and monotone lines. Helvetica, Arial and Futura are examples of sans-serif typefaces. Good for headers and for small body text (small font-sizes such as 8 point and less.)



sans-serif

Script

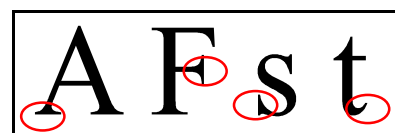
Typeface design based on ornate calligraphic look. Typically used on wedding invitations, ornate restaurant menus and so on.



script

Serif

See also sans-serif slab-serif.. A finishing stroke on the end of the stem of a letter. Can vary in size from slabs as thick as the stem, to razor thin flicks at the end if a letter. Times, Garamond and Goudy are all serif typefaces. Those "finishing strokes" or "fillips" going off the ending lines of a letter. For example, when the number "1" or the letter "i" are drawn with a bar across the bottom, the two halves of the bar are serifs. If the serif is joined to the letter by a slight flaring out, it is said to be "bracketed."



serif

Because Serif fonts are designed to lead the eye between characters, the eye more naturally groups letters together (form words). This font group is generally good for body text, although not as effective in large point sizes and becomes cluttered as small point sizes (at 8 point and less.)

Stem

In typeface design an upright stroke in a letter or character. Looking at the sample serif font above, an example of a 'stem' is the upward stroke from the lowercase t.

Type family

A related collection of type fonts in various weights and versions. Stone is a very large type family that includes both serif and sans serif fonts.

Typeface

A design interpretation - often named after the designer of a complete character-set including numerals, punctuation and symbols in various weights and styles

x-height also known as body height

The body size, excluding ascender and descender, of a letter (i.e. the height of a lowercase "x" in a typeface).

Sources and References

For more information, refer to supporting reference notes on the web server.
<http://www.redsun.com/> Type Tamer Resources

<http://www.tongatapu.net.to/compstud/> - Computer Studies Course Notes
<http://www.tongatapu.net.to> - **Tonga on the 'NET**

<http://www.tongatapu.net.to> is available on all networked computers at Queen Salote College.

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