

Typography

Fonts, Line height, Measure, Letter-spacing,



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Typography

Definition

*Typography - from the Greek words τύπος *typos* "form" and γράφειν *graphein* "to write"*

[Wikipedia](#)

Typography is the art and technique of arranging type in order to make the language it forms most appealing to transparent learning and recognition. The arrangement of type involves the selection of typefaces, point size, line length, leading (line spacing), adjusting the spaces between groups of letters (tracking) and adjusting the space between pairs of letters (kerning).

[Wikipedia](#)

For too long typographic style and its accompanying attention to detail have been overlooked by website designers, particularly in body copy. In years gone by this could have been put down to the technology, but now the web has caught up. The advent of much improved browsers, text rendering and high resolution screens, combine to negate technology as an excuse.

The Elements of Typographic Style Applied to the Web

The Book

The Elements of Typographic Style

What we care about

The Elements of Typographic Style Applied to the Web

An unaffiliated webpage applying the same principles to web typography.

Main Goals in Typography

***Legibility** is primarily the concern of the typeface designer, to ensure that each individual character or glyph is unambiguous and distinguishable from all other characters in the font. Legibility is also in part the concern of the typographer to select a typeface with appropriate clarity of design for the intended use at the intended size.*

Wikipedia

***Readability** is primarily the concern of the typographer or information designer. It is the intended result of the complete process of presentation of textual material in order to communicate meaning as unambiguously as possible. A reader should be assisted in navigating around the information with ease, by optimal inter-letter, inter-word and particularly inter-line spacing, coupled with appropriate line length and position on the page, careful editorial “chunking” and choice of the text architecture of titles, folios, and reference links.*

Wikipedia

Legibility 'refers to perception' and **readability** 'refers to comprehension'.

Typographers aim to achieve excellence in *both*.

Wikipedia

Typography in CSS

Measure

Choose a comfortable measure

The measure is the number of characters in single line of a column of text.

HTML doesn't have a concept of columns per se, instead text is held within boxes. In CSS the width of a box is set using the width property with any unit of length

```
p {  
    width: 300px;  
}
```


Choose a comfortable measure

Anything from 45 to 75 characters is widely regarded as a satisfactory length of line for a single-column page set in a serifed text face in a text size.

The 66-character line (counting both letters and spaces) is widely regarded as ideal. For multiple column work, a better average is 40 to 50 characters.

Choose a comfortable measure

A simple way to calculate the measure is to use Robert Bringhurst's method which multiplies the type size by 30. So if the type size is 10px, multiplying it by 30 gives you a measure of 300px or around 65 characters per line.

The code would look something like this:

```
p {  
  font-size: 10px;  
  width: 300px;  
}
```

Leading

Choose a basic leading that suits the typeface, text and measure

Vertical space is metered in a different way to horizontal space. You must choose not only the overall measure - the depth of the column or page - but also a basic rhythmical unit. This unit is the leading, which is the distance from one baseline to the next.

Choose a basic leading ...

Leading (pronounced “ledding”) is so called because, in mechanical presses, strips of lead are placed between lines of type to space the lines apart. Leading is achieved in css through the line-height property.

For example 12 point text can be given 3 points of lead in the following manner:

```
p {  
    font-size: 12px; line-height: 18px;  
}
```


Choose a basic leading ...

Leading is the space between the lines of type in a body of copy that plays a big role in readability. Correctly spaced lines make it easier for a reader to follow the type and improves the overall appearance of the text.

Leading also alters typographic color, which is the density or tone of a composition.

Choose a basic leading ...

Many factors affect leading: typeface, type size, weight, case, measure, wordspacing, etc.

A good rule is to set the leading at 1.5 times the type size. So if you set the type at 12px, a 18px line-height should work well.

Tip: In CSS line-height can be set as a unitless relative value. So setting a 'line-height: 1.5' is all you will ever need.

Typographic Scale

Connecting the dots ...

In typography the different aspects of typesetting are often related

- The longer the measure, the more leading is needed.
- The larger the type size, the less leading is required.

Typographic Scale

Always compose with a scale, whether it's the traditional scale developed in the sixteenth century that we're all familiar with, or one you create on your own. A scale is important because it establishes a *typographic hierarchy* that improves readability and creates harmony and cohesiveness within the text.



Typographic Scale

```
h1 { font-size: 48px; }  
h2 { font-size: 36px; }  
h3 { font-size: 24px; }  
h4 { font-size: 21px; }  
h5 { font-size: 18px; }  
h6 { font-size: 16px; }  
p  { font-size: 14px; }
```

The EM

An explanation of ems

Bringhurst describes the em thus:

The em is a sliding measure. One em is a distance equal to the type size.

In 6 point type, an em is 6 points; in 12 point type an em is 12 points and in 60 point type an em is 60 points. Thus a one em space is proportionately the same in any size.

An explanation of ems

Ems are so-called because they are thought to approximate the size of an uppercase letter M, although 1 em is actually significantly larger than this.

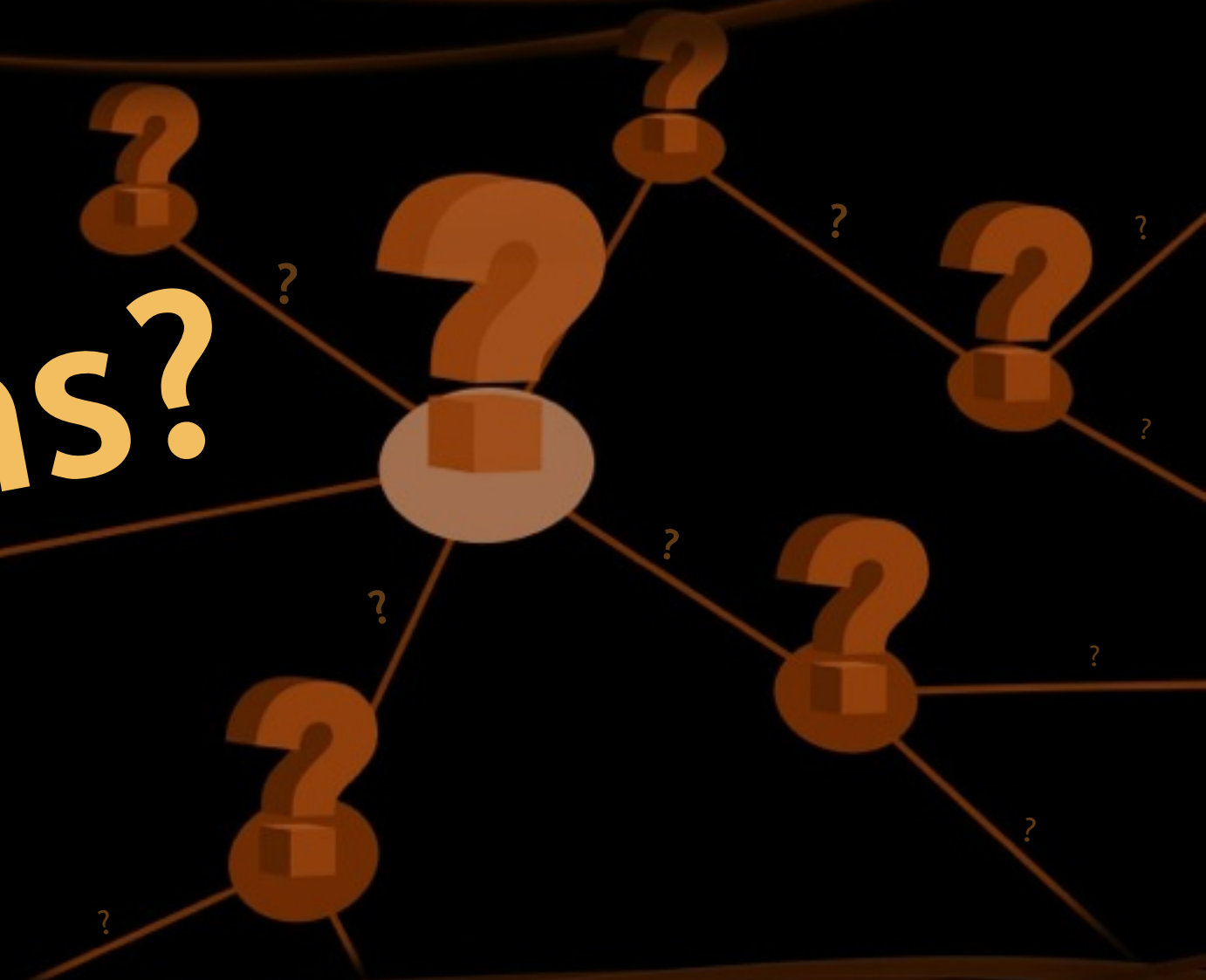
An explanation of ems

To illustrate this principle in terms of CSS, consider these styles:

```
.small {  
  font-size:12px;  
  width:1em;  
  height:1em;  
  border:1px solid black;  
}  
  
.big {  
  font-size:60px;  
  width:1em;  
  height:1em;  
  border:1px solid black;  
}
```

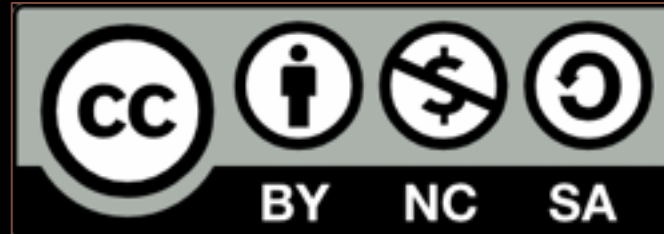


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