

Some
TRICKS & TIPS
for
drawing letters

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

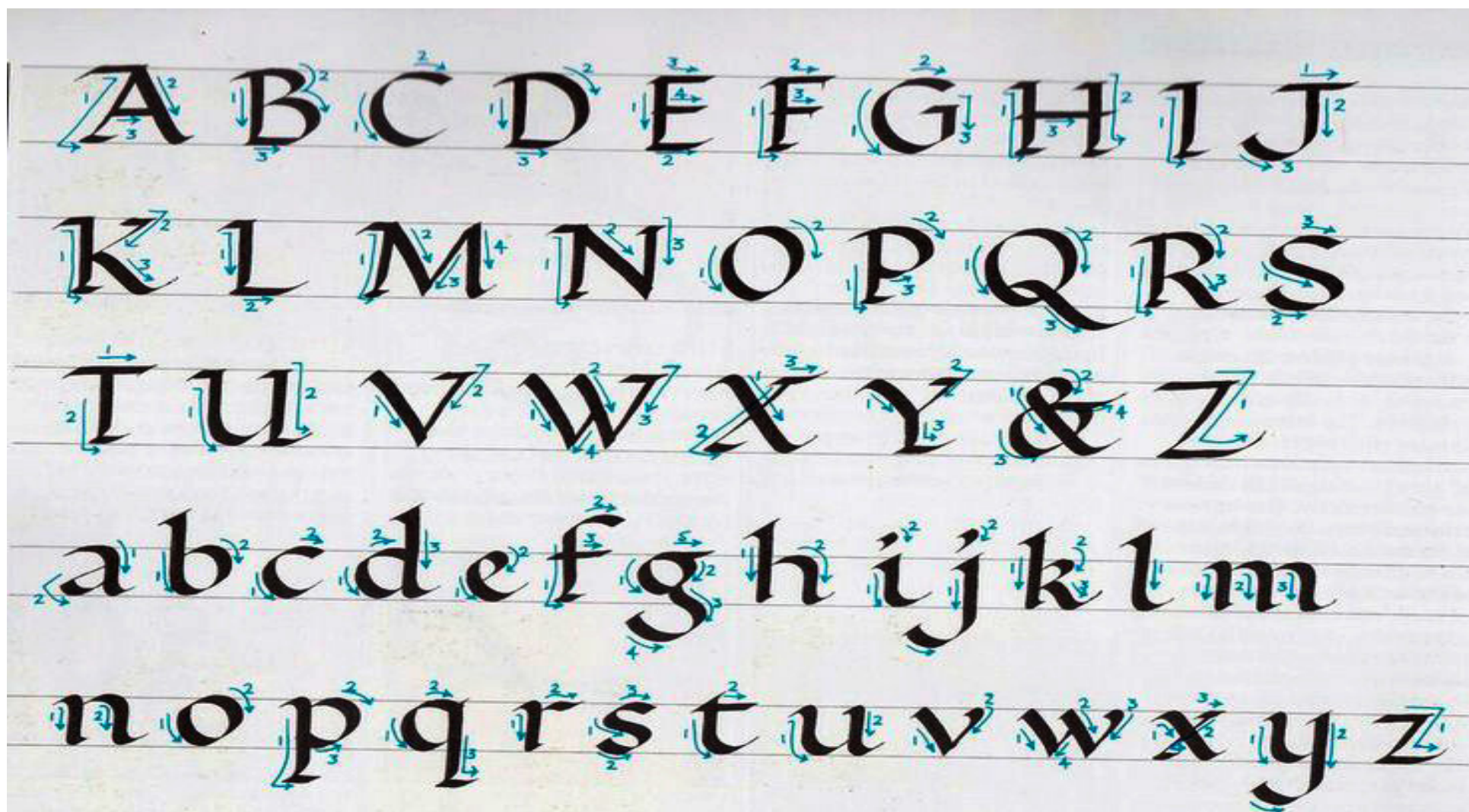
o p q r s t u

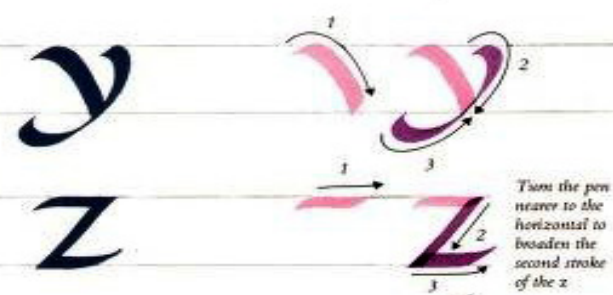
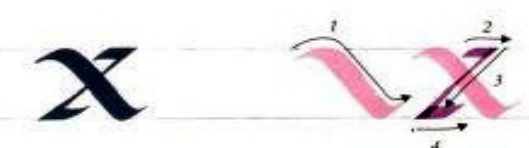
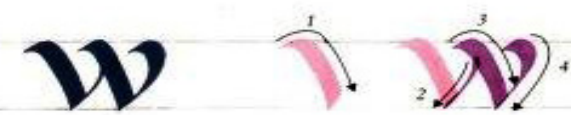
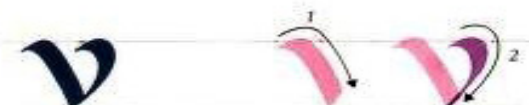
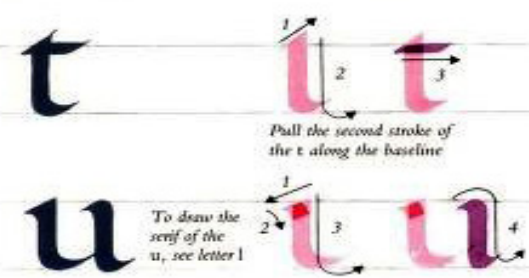
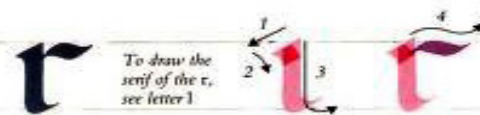
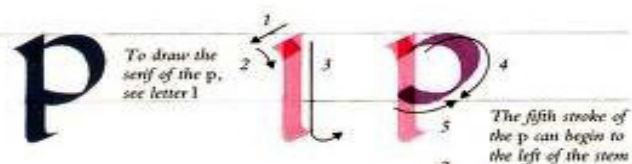
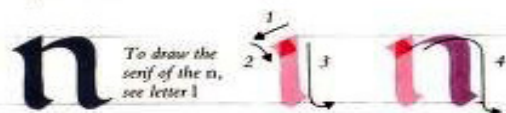
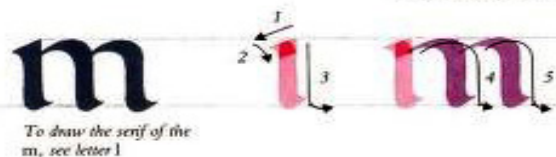
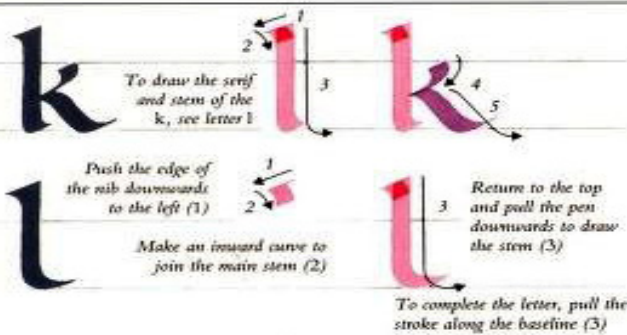
v w x y z

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 0

FOUNDATIONAL HAND



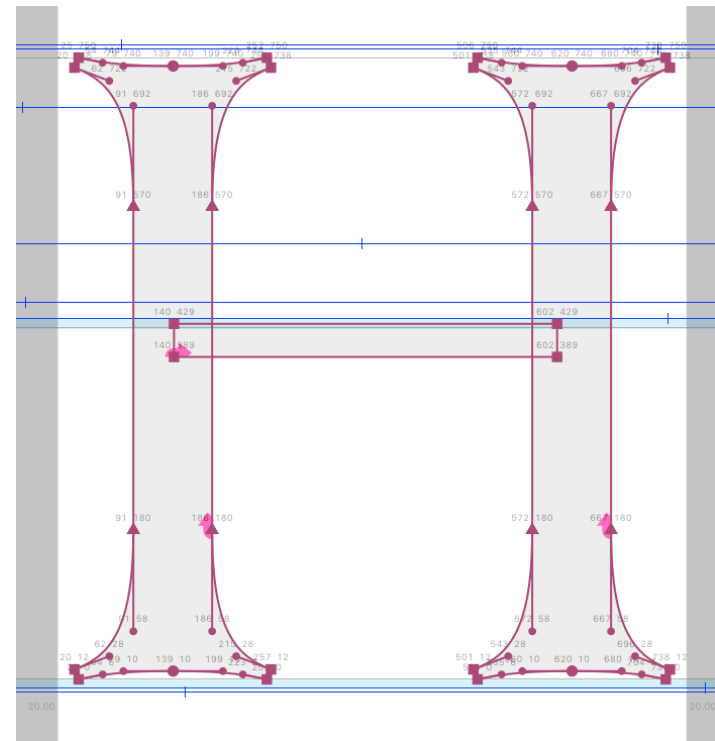


This alternative g may prove easier for beginners to pen than the traditional form

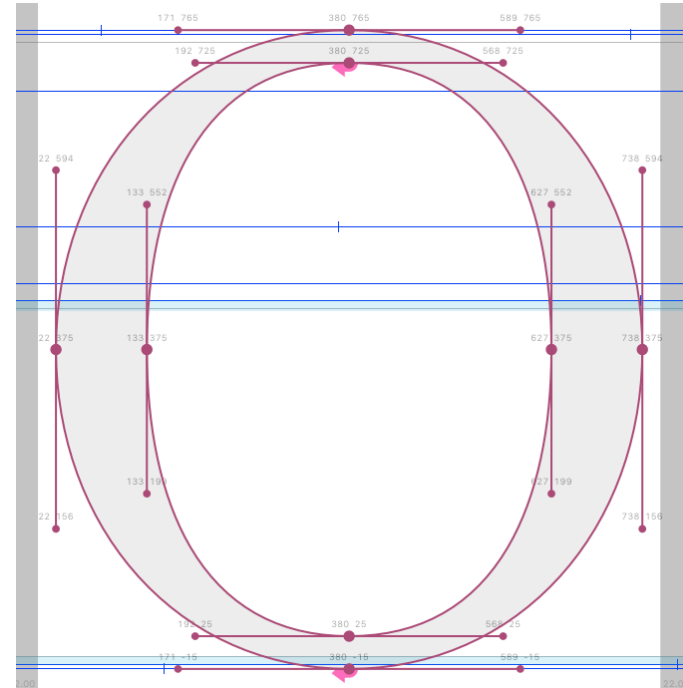
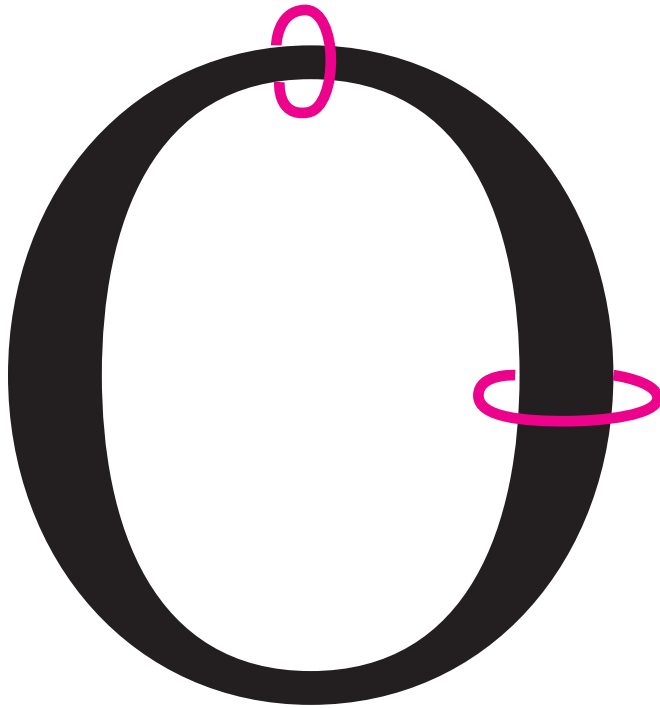




- Think of the letter forms as a kit of parts.
- Keep shapes in distinct components as much as possible.

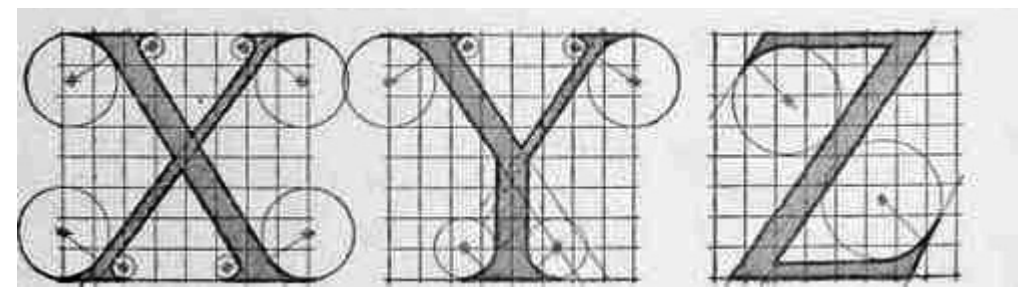
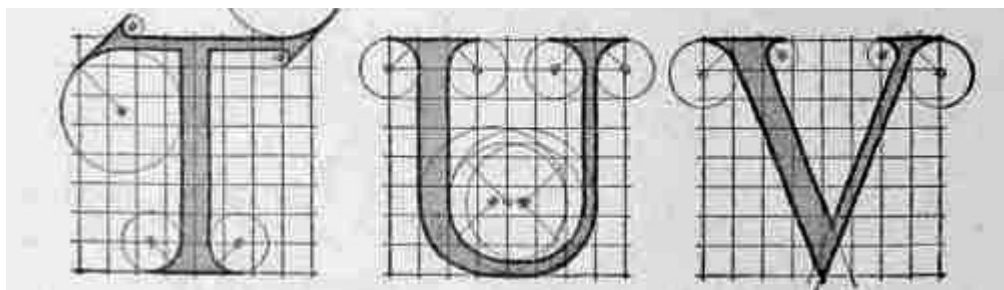
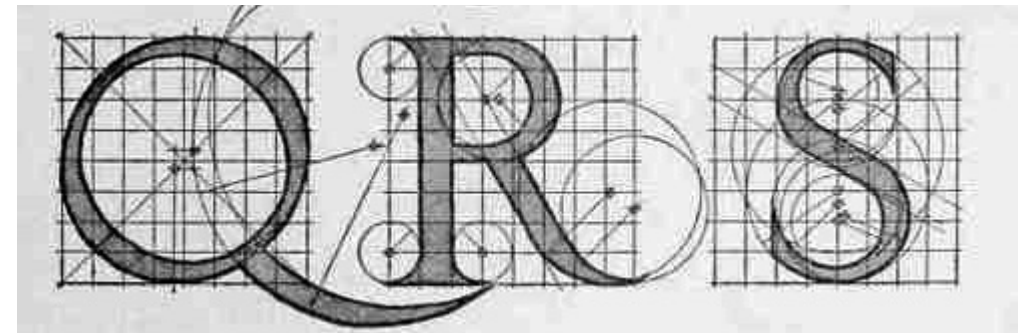
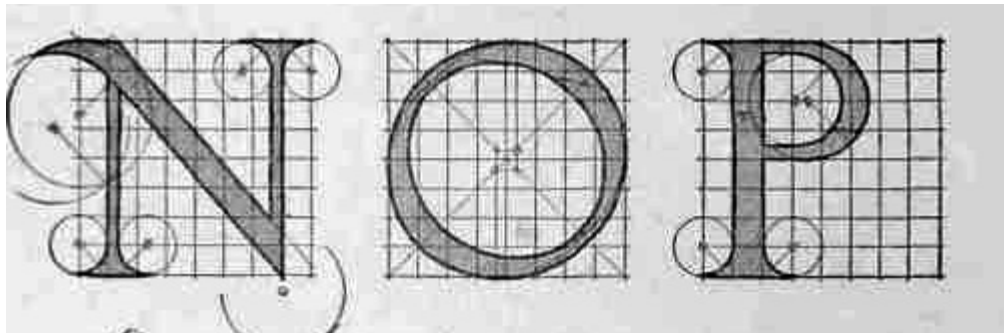
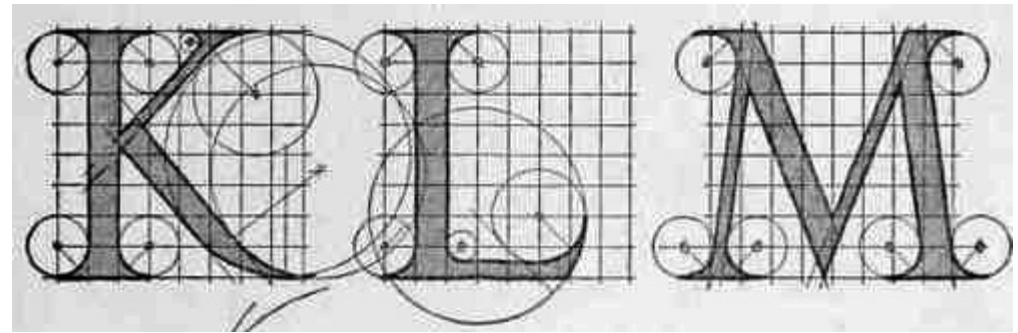
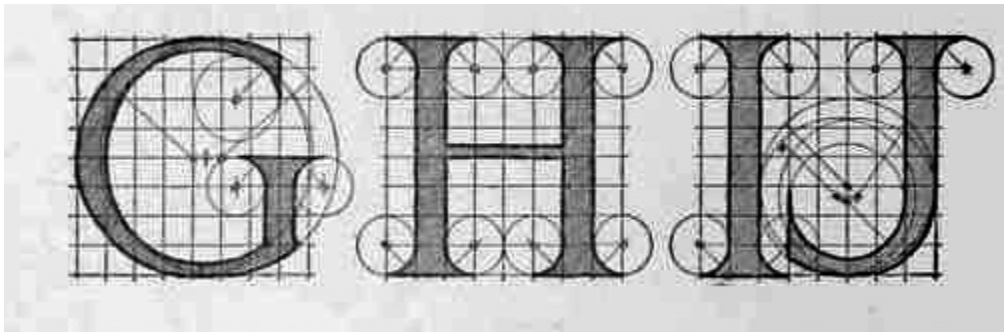
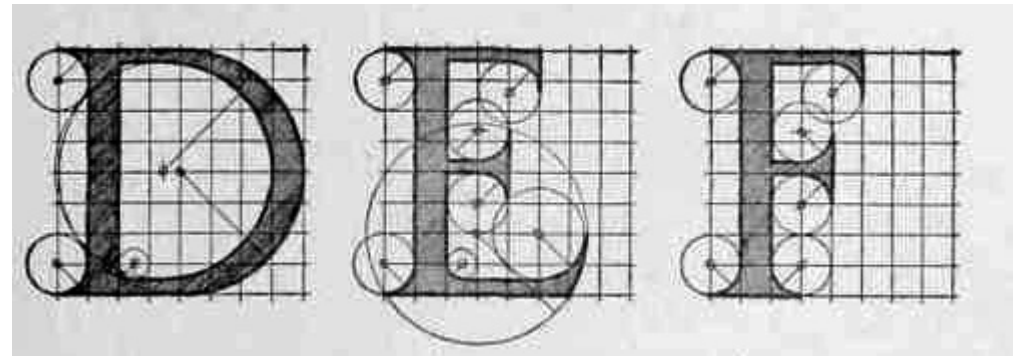
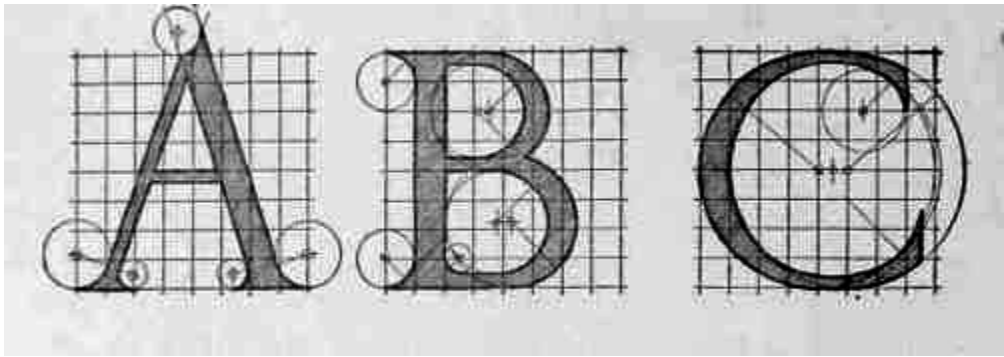


- Be aware of point structure.
- Work orthogonally.
That means placing points either perpendicular, at right angles and/or at the outer most points of the curves or shapes.
- Use as few points as possible.
Try to keep the handles short, symmetrical and orthogonal.
- Bezier handles should not overlap or cross.



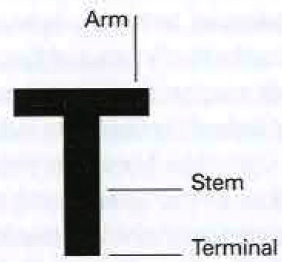
- Identify and maintain a 'thinnest thin' (for example top of **O**, and a 'thickest thick' for example the sides of the **O**)





CLASSICAL PROPORTION

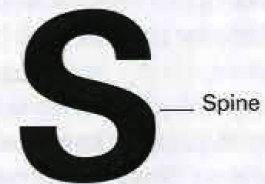
Arm
Stem
Terminal

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'T' in a serif font. Three labels with leader lines point to its parts: 'Arm' points to the top horizontal bar, 'Stem' points to the vertical bar, and 'Terminal' points to the bottom of the stem.

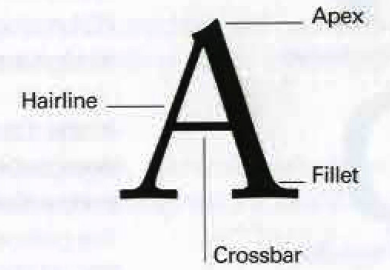
Shoulder
Stroke
Tail

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'R' in a serif font. Three labels with leader lines point to its parts: 'Shoulder' points to the top curve, 'Stroke' points to the main vertical body, and 'Tail' points to the bottom curve.

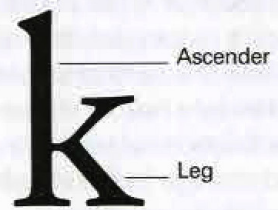
Spine

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'S' in a serif font. One label with a leader line points to the 'Spine', which is the central vertical axis of the letter.

Apex
Hairline
Fillet
Crossbar

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'A' in a serif font. Four labels with leader lines point to its parts: 'Apex' points to the top point, 'Hairline' points to the upper left stroke, 'Fillet' points to the upper right stroke, and 'Crossbar' points to the horizontal bar.

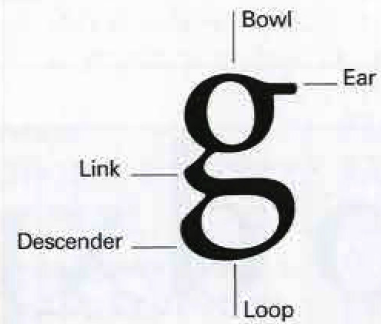
Ascender
Leg

A diagram of the lowercase letter 'k' in a serif font. Two labels with leader lines point to its parts: 'Ascender' points to the upper vertical stroke, and 'Leg' points to the lower diagonal stroke.

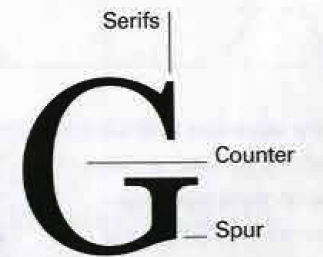
Eye

A diagram of the lowercase letter 'e' in a serif font. One label with a leader line points to the 'Eye', which is the central negative space of the letter.

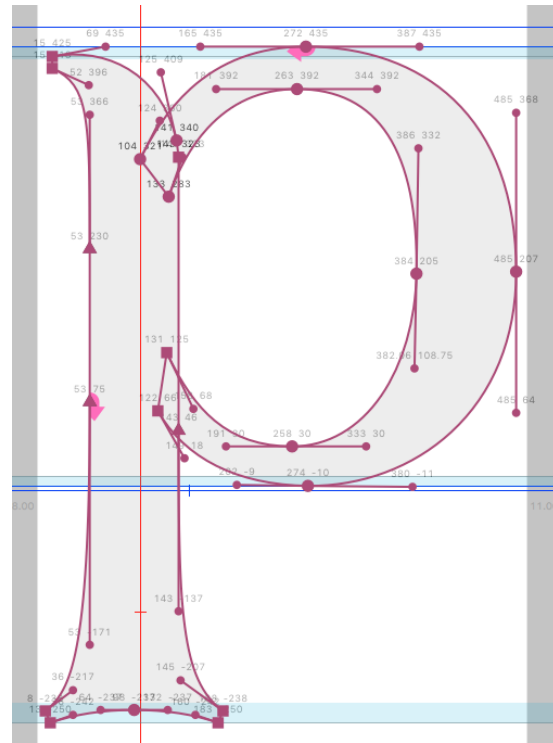
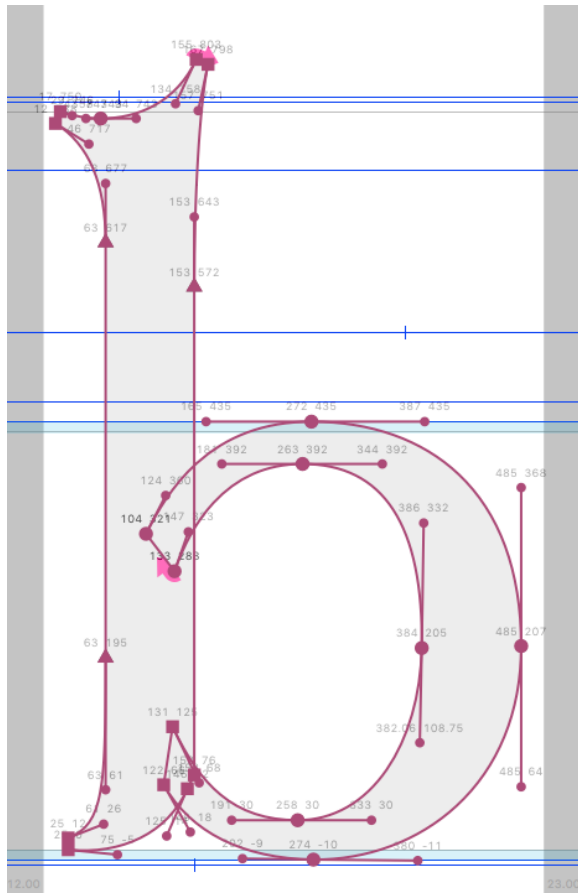
Bowl
Ear
Link
Descender
Loop

A diagram of the lowercase letter 'g' in a serif font. Five labels with leader lines point to its parts: 'Bowl' points to the upper circular part, 'Ear' points to the top right curve, 'Link' points to the middle vertical stroke, 'Descender' points to the lower vertical stroke, and 'Loop' points to the bottom curve.

Serifs
Counter
Spur

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'G' in a serif font. Three labels with leader lines point to its parts: 'Serifs' points to the top horizontal bar, 'Counter' points to the main body of the letter, and 'Spur' points to the bottom right curve.

ANATOMY



- While you might think that **b** and **d** are the same letter forms, only flipped, **p** is actually more similar to a **b**, with the stem dropped from ascender to descender (and some other slight modifications).



M H P R

- Continuing on the kit of parts theory, stems should be the same thickness and height for many of the letter forms.

A F E H B R

- Pay attention to the placement of the crossbars and arms. They are not necessarily in the middle of the letter form. Many are at the same height, but the **A** is often lower.

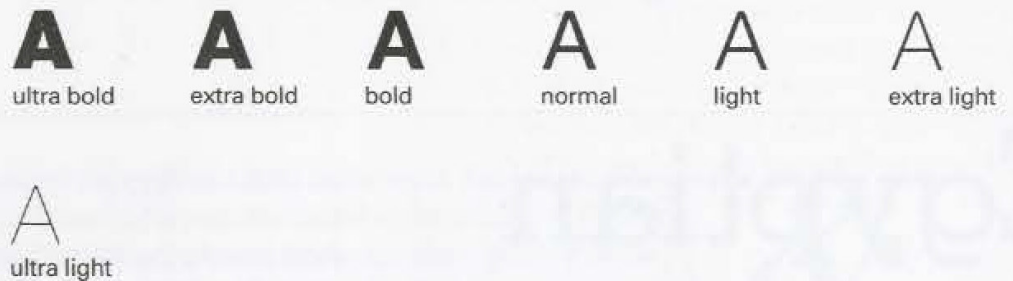
Serifs:

Serifs provide some of the most identifiable features of typefaces, and in some cases they reveal clues about their historical evolution. The serifs shown are those that appear most frequently in typefaces.



Weight:

This is a feature defined by the ratio between the relative width of the strokes of letterforms and their height. On the average, a letter of normal weight possesses a stroke width of approximately 15% of its height, whereas bold is 20% and light is 10%.



Width:

Width is an expression of the ratio between the black vertical strokes of the letterforms and the intervals of white between them. When white intervals appear larger, letters appear wider. A letter whose width is approximately 80% of its height is considered normal. A condensed letter is 60%, and an expanded letter is 100% of its height.



Thick/thin contrast:

This visual feature refers to the relationship between the thinnest parts of the strokes in letters and the thickest parts. The varying ratios between these parts produce a wide range of visual textures in text type.



high
contrast



medium
contrast



low contrast



no contrast

x-height:

This proportional characteristic can vary immensely in different typefaces of the same size. Typically, x-heights are considered to be “tall” when they are at least two-thirds the height of capital letters. They are “short” when they measure one-half the height of capital letters.



extra tall



tall



medium



short



extra short

Stress:

The stress of letters, which is a prominent visual axis resulting from the relationships between thick and thin strokes, may be left-angled, vertical, or right-angled in appearance.



left-angled



vertical



right-angled

**have fun!!*