ClassifyIng Type

Typeface Groups

Choosing the right font for the job is an important design decision. There are so many different fonts available for the computer that it would be almost impossible to learn the names of every one. However, many typefaces share similar qualities. Typographers classify fonts into groups to help remember the different kinds. Often, a font from within one group can be substituted for another when not available to achieve the same effect. Different typographers use different groups. The classification system used by Stevenson includes seven major groups.

The **ROMAN** typeface group

Roman typefaces are the most popular group of typefaces and the easiest to read. Most books and newspapers are printed with Roman types. All Roman typefaces have serifs. Over the years, many Roman typefaces have been designed. They all have thick and thin lines but the modern faces are more mechanical looking with greater contrast between the thick and thin lines than the old style. The serifs on modern faces are more regular.

Example of a Roman typeface

Example of a Roman typeface

Example of a Roman typeface

Oldstyle Roman

Modern Roman

Compare the Oldstyle serif
to the Modern serif
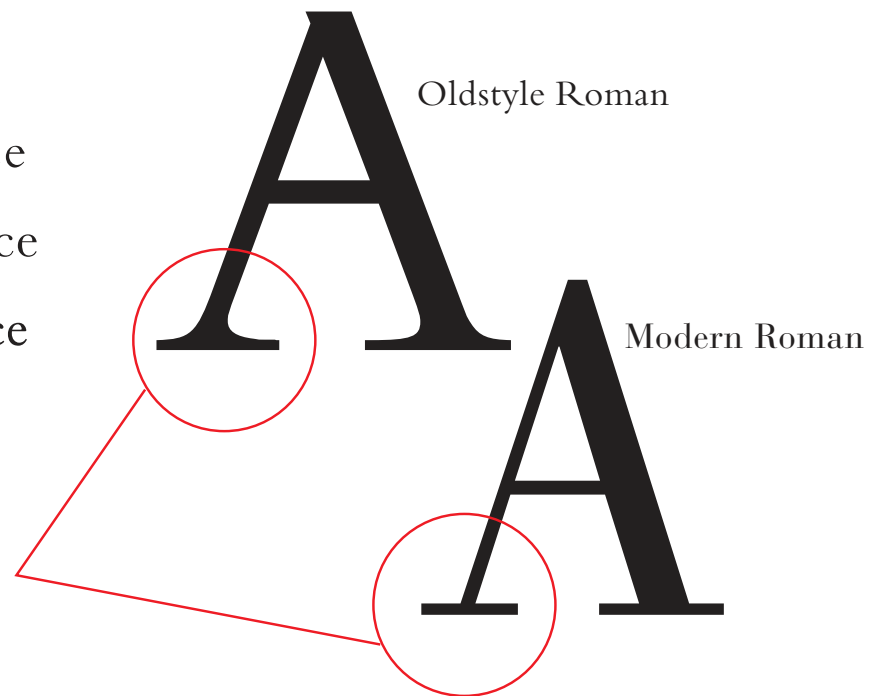
The Sans Serif typeface group

Sans serif means "without feet" in French because these faces have no **serifs**. They usually have a uniform line weight. They are useful when used as display lines and for captions. The simple appearance of sans serif types make them a good choice for a modern looking layout.

Example of a Sans Serif typeface

Example of a Sans Serif typeface

Example of a Sans Serif typeface

A

Sans serif faces have no serifs

The Slab Serif typeface group

The slab serif types, also called square serifs, originated in the 19th century. The faces have a mechanical look and are often used for posters. The line weight tends to be uniform with flat, straight serifs. Slab serif faces are a good choice for strong, bold layouts. Typewriter faces are also included in this group, as well as the Clarendons. The Clarendon type faces have square, bracketed serifs.

Example of a Slab Serif typeface

Example of a Slab Serif typeface

Example of a Slab Serif typeface

A

Slab serif faces have bold, flat serifs

The Script typeface group

This group covers any face that is made to look "hand written". Often they are made to look like fine penmanship and are very fancy. Sometimes these faces seem to connect to resemble cursive handwriting or have a tail on the end of each letter that leads to the next. A Script face is often used for wedding announcements or other formal occasions.
Do not confuse them with italic letters. Avoid setting most script faces in all uppercase.

Example of a Script typeface

Example of a Script typeface

Example of a Script typeface

Example of a Script typeface

A

The Blackletter typeface group

The Blackletter group covers those faces inspired by the earliest European typefaces. The Guntenburg Bible was set in Blackletter. These faces are also called 'Text' faces. Because these faces tend to be hard to read, they should be used sparingly. As with script faces they should not be set in all uppercase.

Example of a Blackletter typeface

Example of a Blackletter typeface

Example of a Blackletter typeface

The Picture & Symbol ❦ typeface group

Symbols and ornaments have traditionally been used by printers to decorate and enhance typographic designs. Informative graphic symbols are also available in font form. Any non-letter symbol will be included in this group.

THE DECORATIVE & DISPLAY TYPEFACE GROUP

Novelty types are the special faces that do not fit into the other groups. They can add interest and spice to your titles and layouts. Use them as accents to the other faces you use.

Novelty typeface

Novelty typeface

Novelty typeface

NOVELTY TYPEFACE

NOVELTY TYPEFACE

Type family

A **type family** contains all the style variations of a common font name. Many have a face that slants to the right, called italic or oblique. Oblique letters are slanted, while italic letters are slanted and have changes in design and weight. Italic letters should not be confused with cursive or script fonts.

Garamond Roman
Garamond Italic
Garamond Bold
Garamond Bold Italic
Garamond Condensed
Garamond Condensed Italic
Garamond Bold Condensed
Garamond Bold Condensed Italic
Garamond Roman Small Caps
Garamond Bold Small Caps

Some type families are larger than others, but many contain a bold, an italic, and a bold italic. Some families contain a condensed and extended version of the face.

Typographic Rules

Professional typographers and designers follow certain typographic rules and conventions to maintain quality in designs and layout. Often companies maintain a book of house rules to ensure consistency. The Thunder Graphic style rules follow.

- Never set Script (*SCRIPT*) or Blackletter (𝔅𝔩𝔞𝔠𝔨𝔩𝔢𝔱𝔱𝔢𝔯) in all caps.

- Use only one space after periods, colons, exclamation points, and questions marks.

- Use ALL-CAPS sparingly and track (letter space) the letters slightly to increase legibility.

- Avoid underlining to set off words, phrases, and titles. Use italics instead.

- Indent paragraphs approximately one em space–a space equal to the size of the type you are using.

- An ellipsis…(option-semicolon) is used to indicate where text has been purposely omitted.

- When to use hyphens, en and em dashes:
    - A hyphen is used in words such as mother-in-law, in phone numbers, and to break a word at the end of a line.

    - An en dash (option-hyphen) is used between words to indicate a duration, such as Monday–Friday. It is also used to set off phrases within a sentence–such as in this example. Use positive kerning to add a little space on either side of the en dash.

    - An em dash (shift-option-hyphen) is used to introduce speakers in a narrative dialogue.