

A presentation to the



by

Alan Siggs

Dip. T. TAFE

Leading Vocational Teacher

Topics

- Hand Typesetting (Handset – Hot Metal)
- Machine Typesetting (Hot Metal) (Linotype, Monotype, Ludlow)
- Phototypesetting (Command Based – Paper Tape, Split Screen) – Galley proofs
- Pagination Systems (Proprietary Systems) – Computerised Telephone Directory
- Desktop Publishing – output to Bromide paper or film
- Output direct to plate (CTP)
- Digital Printing
- Typography
- Recent developments in software – DTP and Web publishing (Adobe CS)
- Forum – questions on DTP applications and print in general

Font

A font is a complete alphabet of one size of one typeface. The number and type of incidental characters in a font varies.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstvwxyz
abcdefghijklmnopqrstvwxyz
1234567890.,;:?'”()[]{}`~
/<>+=-÷@#\$\$%^&*~™£¢∞§¶•ªº≠

Family

Many type faces are designed in a variety of different typestyles. The most common is where the letters are upright (mostly referred to as Roman). Other common styles are italic, bold and bold italic. All of the styles in one typeface are referred to as a family.

Times Roman

Times Italic

Times Bold

Times Bold Italic

Series

A Series is when referring to all of the styles *and sizes* of a given typeface. Using typestyles from the same family gives a printed job a unified appearance.

Arial Regular

Arial Italic

Arial Bold

Arial Bold Italic

Arial Black

Arial Narrow Regular

Arial Narrow Italic

Arial Narrow Bold

Arial Narrow Bold Italic

From 18 point to 10 point

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

Arial Regular

The choice of typeface for a publication relies not just on the use of a serif or sans serif typeface, but on the use of either in conjunction with the following important considerations:

Appropriateness

Readability

Legibility

Appropriateness:

The typeface must be appropriate for the *product* and the *audience* to which it is directed.

Is the product being printed for the purpose of distributing information (Educational Publication, Newspaper) or for entertainment (Magazine)?

Another factor to consider is the amount of copy to be set – an ornamental typeface which may be suitable for one or two words may be inappropriate for a block of text.

If we were typesetting a publication for early primary school children an appropriate typeface and size may be:

Early Primary School reader
(Helvetica Neue – 22 point)

A publication being typeset for higher primary:

Later Primary School reader
(Palatino – 14 point)

Secondary or tertiary books would be more appropriate set in a serif typeface at point sizes between 9 and 12 point.

(Century Schoolbook – 12 point)

Used as a newspaper headline

This typeface may be appropriate – Arial Bold – 22 point.

Used in a newspaper, this typeface is totally inappropriate. It break all three rules of Appropriateness, Readability and Legibility.

Appropriateness *(Continued)*:

The following typefaces have their place – as long as the rules are maintained:

Script Typefaces are used for formal invitations or in advertising certain products requiring some “flair”.

You are invited to our Wedding

International Florists

However – never use Script typefaces all in capitals.

INTERNATIONAL

FLORISTS

There are also typefaces (often called Old English) that must be used only in certain ways.

You are invited to our Wedding

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR WEDDING

Legibility:

A typeface must be legible – some typefaces are easier to read than others.

* The typefaces people consider most legible are the ones they are most familiar with.

There is also an ongoing controversy whether serif typefaces are more legible than sans serif styles.

Research has shown, however, that newspaper columns, books, etc. are more legible if set in a serif style.

Communicating **OR JUST MAKING PRETTY SHAPES** – *Colin Wheildon* – Newspaper Advertising Bureau of Australia Limited

** There may even be some debate here. If familiarity with a typeface makes it easier to read – then why do we no longer use typewriter typefaces?*

The typefaces people consider most legible are the ones they are most familiar with - there is an ongoing controversy whether serif typefaces are more legible than sans serif styles.

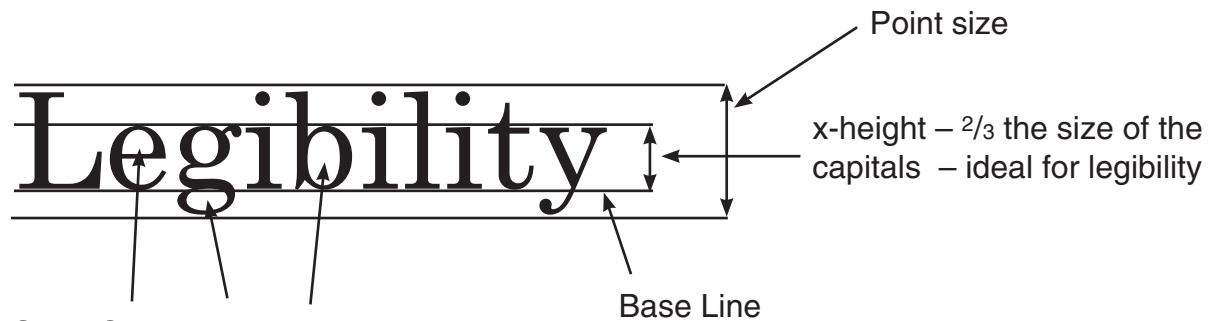
- Legibility is improved when the x-height of the lower case characters is approximately two-thirds the size of the Capital Letters. Larger x-heights usually allow for larger counters to avoid the problem of “filling in” on the press.
- Leading assists the legibility when it is set to be slightly larger than the point size. (Most Desktop Publishing programs use the value 120% as the default leading setting.)



Legibility

Legibility

In DTP programs, Leading is set at 120% of Point Size



Open Counters to aid in printing (particularly in the Newspaper sector)

Legibility (Continued):

from Colin Wheildon

On this question - which is easier to read: serif or sans serif body type – there appears to be complete polarization of thought.

There are few major newspapers today which use sans serif type for the body text. Conversely, many major magazines choose sans serif.

Serif faces have long been regarded as highly readable. One theory was that the serifs acted as tramlines, keeping the eyes on target. Another was that the modulated thick and thin strokes of serif types provided greater opportunity for individual letters, and hence words, to be distinguished and read.

In research collated by the British Medical Council in 1926, it was asserted that the absence of serifs in sans serif body type permitted what the council referred to as irradiation, an optical effect in which space between lines of type intruded into the letters, setting up a form of light vibration, which militated against comfortable reading.

Serifs, the research said, prevented this irradiation; thus serif types were easier to read.

But they also argue that any difficulties with comprehensibility – should they exist – will pass, as people become more and more used to seeing and reading sans serif.

People will grow to live with it, and it will soon become comprehensible to all, and all will eventually love it, they say.

This is nonsense. It's analogous to saying that instead of feeding your children wheatie pops, you should feed them wood shavings. They'll get used to them and in time will learn to love them.

In the tests on the comprehensibility of serif body matter versus sans serif, the same procedure was used as for the previous series of tests. Body type was eight point Corona

on a nine point body for the serif layouts, and eight point Helvetica on a nine point body for the sans serif layouts.

The results on Serif Versus Sans Serif

| Comprehension levels | | | |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| | Good | Fair | Poor |
| | % | % | % |
| Layout with serif body type | 67 | 19 | 14 |
| Layout with san serif body type | 12 | 23 | 65 |

Comments made by readers who showed poor comprehension of articles set in sans serif had a common theme – the difficulty in holding concentration.

Communicating **OR JUST MAKING PRETTY SHAPES** – Colin Wheildon – Newspaper Advertising Bureau of Australia Limited

Legibility (*Continued*):

The following information came from David Ogilvy –

Good typography helps people read your copy, while bad typography prevents them doing so.

Advertising agencies usually set their headlines in capital letters. This is a mistake. Professor Tinker of Stanford has established that capitals retard reading. They have no ascenders or descenders to help you recognize words, and tend to be read letter by letter.

The eye is a creature of habit. People are accustomed to reading books, magazines and newspapers in lowercase.

Another way to make headlines hard to read is to superimpose them on an illustration.

Another mistake is to put a period at the end of headlines. Periods are also called full stops, because they stop the reader dead in his tracks. You will find no full stops at the end of headlines in newspapers.

Yet another common mistake is to set copy in a measure which is too wide or too narrow to be legible. People are accustomed to reading newspapers which are set about 40 characters wide.

Which typefaces are easiest to read? Those which people are accustomed to reading, like the Century family, Caslon, Baskerville and Jenson. The more outlandish the typeface, the harder it is to read. The drama belongs in what you say, not in the typeface.

Sans serif faces like this are particularly difficult to read.

Says John Updike:

“Serifs exist for a purpose. They help the eye pick up the shape of the letter. Piquant in little amounts, sans serif in page-size sheets repels readership as wax paper repels water; it has a sleazy, cloudy look”.

Some art directors use copy as the raw material for designing queer shapes, thus making it illegible.

In a recent issue of a magazine I found 47 advertisements with the copy set in *reverse* – white type on a black background. It is almost impossible to read.

OGILVY ON ADVERTISING – *David Ogilvy*
– Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, New York

Legibility (Continued):

Some art directors use copy as the raw material for designing queer shapes, thus making it illegible.

In a recent issue of a magazine I found 47 advertisements with the copy set in *reverse* – white type on a black background. It is very tiring to read.

Text set in reverse is very difficult to read. This should be avoided at all costs. Even if the typeface meets all of the other criteria, if set in white on a black background, the readers will generally skip over the page.

Text set over a light tint of a colour or very light grey is much more acceptable. Readers are able to determine the shape of the words without the interference of the heavy background, which will occasionally cause the type to “dance” in front of the eyes.

Serif

HEADLINES SET IN CAPITAL LETTERS – NO

Headlines set in lower case – Yes

No Full Points at the End

Sans Serif

HEADLINES SET IN CAPITAL LETTERS – NO

Headlines set in lower case – Yes

No Full Points at the End

Legibility *(Continued)*:

One Sans Serif Problem

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ – Arial

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz – Arial

Number One, Lower Case “l” and Cap “l”

1 l l

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ - Verdana

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz – Verdana

Number One, Lower Case “l” and Cap “l”

1 l l

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ - Verdana

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz – Verdana

Number One, Lower Case “l” and Cap “l”

1 l l

Serif Typeface

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

– Baskerville

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz – Baskerville

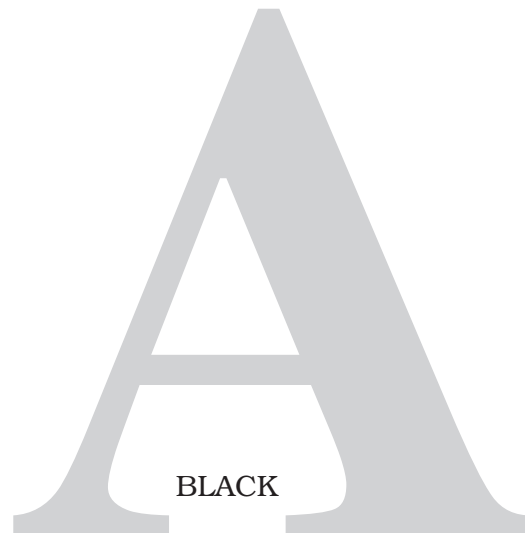
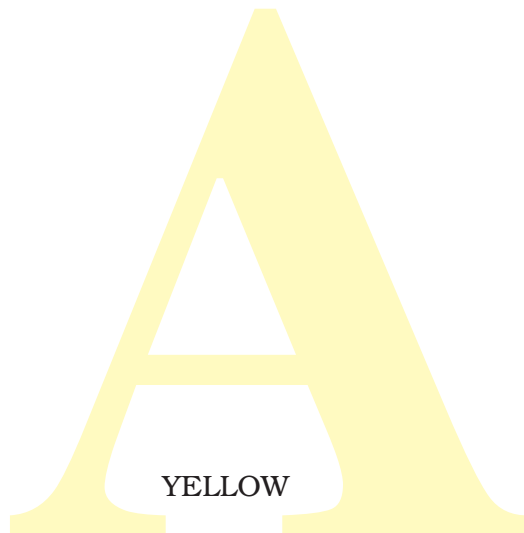
Number One, Lower Case “l” and Cap “l”

1 l l

Legibility *(Continued)*:

Four Colour Text

Text set in colour may be a problem for the reader, particularly when it is set over a second colour on the page. What is an even greater problem, is text that is to be printed in colour that is created with 2, 3 or 4 process colours. Printing machinists find it extremely difficult to get 3 – or worse – 4 colour text to register on the printing press. (C=100; M=60; Y=20; K=10) – a nightmare !!!



Colour **MUST** be used carefully in all of the Desktop Publishing programs. This illustration shows that the colour defined for the text is made up of different values of each of the process colours, to make the final output appear as a very dark blue.



Legibility *(Continued)*:

The text has to be “in register” on the printing press, otherwise the results can be very unpleasant. It only takes a very minor amount of misregistration to turn text into something that is totally illegible and unreadable.



This text has been set in 10 point, however, the colour applied to it is defined as CMYK. The printer then has to attempt to register the four colours so that the text remains readable. This is an incredibly difficult thing to do consistently over a long run.

This text has been set in 10 point, however, the colour applied to it is defined as CMYK. The printer then has to attempt to register the four colours so that the text remains readable. This is an incredibly difficult thing to do consistently over a long run.

Legibility (Continued):

This text has been set in reverse – that is white on a colour background. Serif type is very difficult to read when used in this way.

This text has been set in reverse – that is white on a colour background. Sans Serif type is easier to read when used in this way.

This text has been set over a gradient. This highlights one of the problems of readability and legibility – as the contrast is reduced, so the problem worsens.

Headline

HEADLINE

This text has been set in a dark colour printed over a light colour background. The text is easier to read.

This text has been set in a dark colour on a light background. Used sparingly, this may work.

This text has been set over a gradient. This highlights one of the problems of readability and legibility – as the contrast is reduced, so the problem worsens.

Headline

HEADLINE

Using drop initial letters

It seems that as a result of DTP software providing simple methods of doing things that used to take a great deal of setting up, we now have lots of drop initials being used – however the “standards” are being lost.

INITIAL letters should be accompanied by the remainder of the word being set in capitals. This makes the effect typographically correct by established standards.

SOME PUBLICATIONS ARE USING CAPS for the whole of the first line of the Drop Initial paragraph which appears to be gaining acceptance.

Readability:

Readability is different from legibility – it involves not only the typeface but how it is set – its size, line length, margin sizes, column gutters, paper colour, etc. In other words, everything that makes reading easier and more pleasurable.

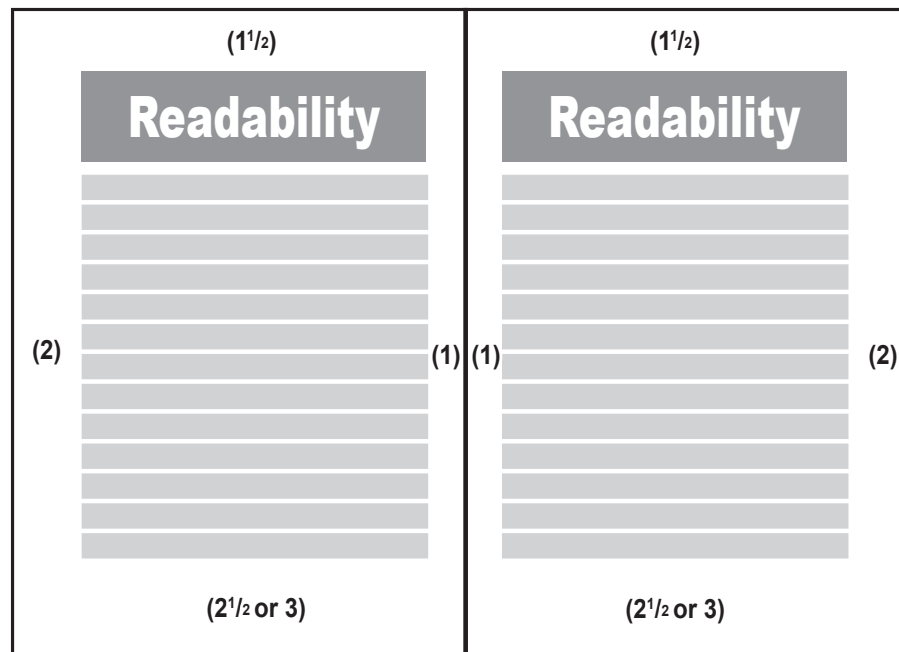
- For blocks of text in newsletters, newspapers, novels, text books etc., point size can range between 8 and 12 point.
- The optimum line length for the purpose of readability should be an alphabet and a half, which is 39 characters per line.
- Kramer and Bernhardt suggest the optimum line length should accommodate 40 to 60 characters per line.

TEACHING TEXT DESIGN – *Robert Kramer & Stephen A. Bernhardt* – New Mexico State University

- Page Margins should be arranged so that the text areas of the page appear to be evenly distributed over a double page spread, as well as sitting marginally above centre, to overcome the optical illusion of appearing too low on the page if the text block is centred vertically in the available space.

Use the formula:

$$1 : 1\frac{1}{2} : 2 : 2\frac{1}{2} \text{ or } 3$$



To Calculate Margins

L = Left Margin

T = Top

O = Outside

B = Bottom

The following formula is a RATIO:

| | | | |
|---|-------|---|------------|
| L | T | O | B |
| 1 | 1 1/2 | 2 | 2 1/2 or 3 |

Using 10 mm as the base, the page margins would be (in mm):

| | | | |
|----|----|----|----------|
| L | T | O | B |
| 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 or 30 |

Readability (Continued):

Numbering

When typesetting paragraphs of text that require numbering (particularly those where multiple levels are needed, once again, for the purposes of readability, indentation and tabulation must be set up correctly for the final product to be readable.

A Bad Example

1. This is an example of copy that has been typeset without consideration of the proper rules of typography.
2. More attention to the rules will improve the readability (and therefore the comprehension) of the reader than most who produce this type of material would care to acknowledge.
3. All of the desktop publishing programs support tabs and indents that make it quite simple to set up numbers, bullets and multi-level numbering.

A Good Example

1. This is an example of copy that has been typeset with proper application of the rules of typography.
2. More attention to the rules will improve the readability (and therefore the comprehension) of the reader than most who produce this type of material would care to acknowledge.
3. All of the desktop publishing programs support tabs and indents that make it quite simple to set up numbers, bullets and multi-level numbering.

Bullets (Automated in InDesign)

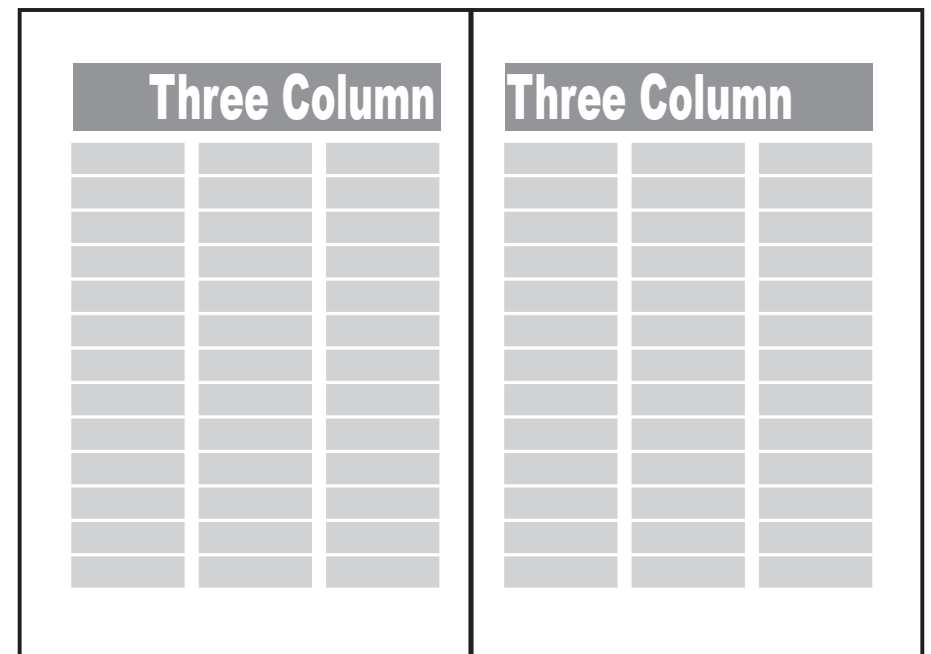
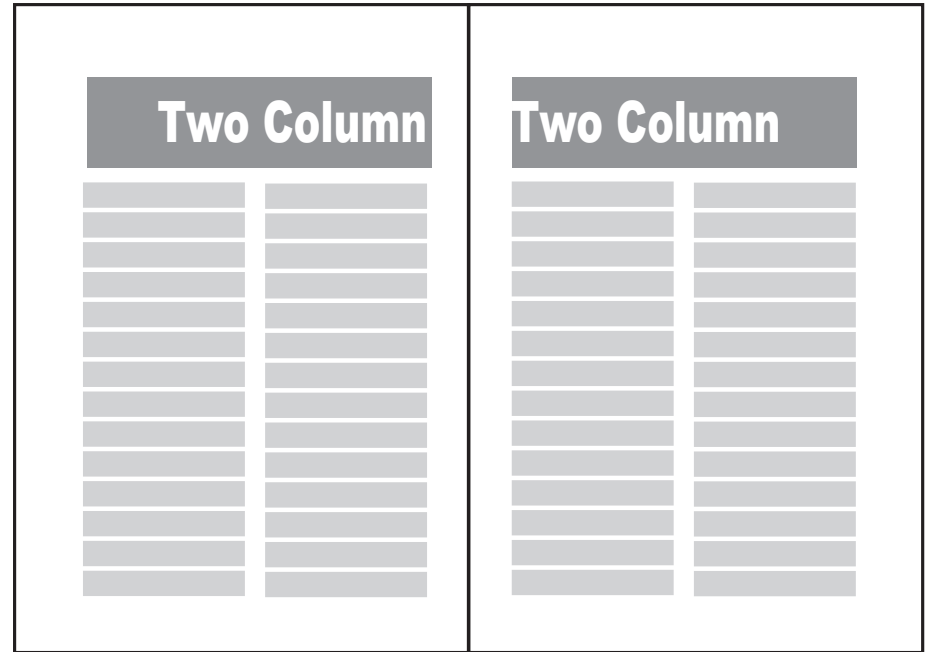
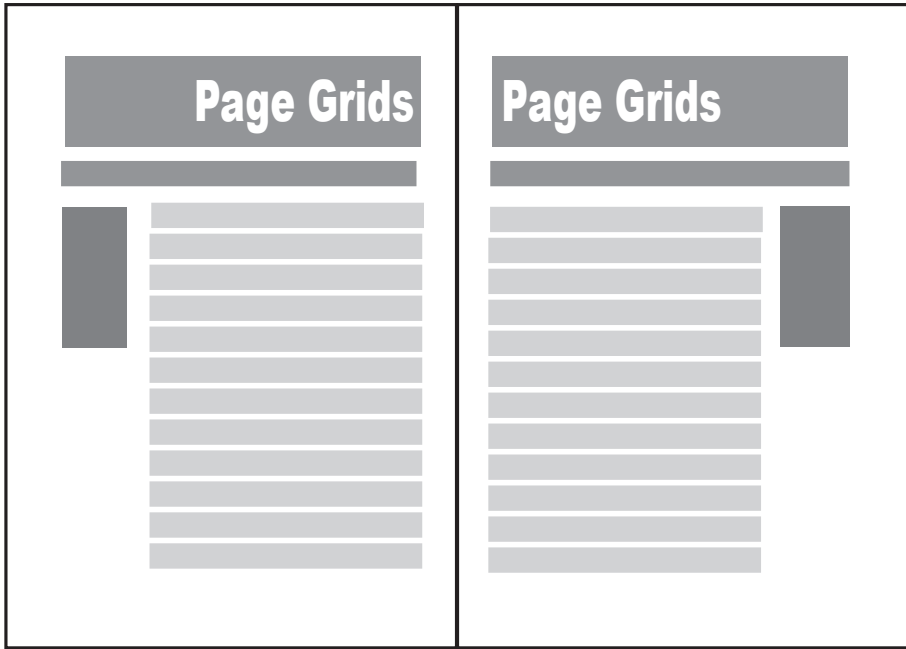
- This is an example of copy that has been typeset with proper application of the rules of typography.
- More attention to the rules will improve the readability (and therefore the comprehension) of the reader than most who produce this type of material would care to acknowledge.
- All of the desktop publishing programs support tabs and indents that make it quite simple to set up numbers, bullets and multi-level numbering

NOTE: *When using numbered paragraphs, the numbers should align on the right.*

Multi-level Numbering

1. This is an example of copy that has been typeset with proper application of the rules of typography.
 - (a) More attention to the rules will improve the readability (and therefore the comprehension) of the reader than most who produce this type of material would care to acknowledge.
 - (b) All of the desktop publishing programs support tabs and indents that make it quite simple to set up numbers, bullets and multi-level numbering.
 - (i) Typeset with proper application of the rules of typography.
 - (ii) More attention to the rules will improve the readability.
 - (iii) All of the desktop publishing programs support tabs and indents that make it quite simple to set up.
 - (c) This is an example of copy that has been typeset with proper application of the rules of typography.

NOTE: *When numbering using roman numerals, the closing parentheses should line up on the RIGHT.*



5 Column Newspaper or Magazine

GRAPHIC

Story Headline

Text block containing multiple lines of placeholder text in a 3-column format.

Text block containing a sub-headline and multiple lines of placeholder text in a 2-column format.

5 Column Newspaper or Magazine

GRAPHIC

Text block containing a sub-headline and multiple lines of placeholder text in a 2-column format.

Story Headline

Text block containing multiple lines of placeholder text in a 3-column format.

You be the judge:

Typeface: Bookman Old Style

I used to work at The Sacramento Union, a major daily newspaper. It is the same place Samuel Clemens worked under the moniker, Mark Twain.

(We DID NOT work there at the same time.)

The typesetters there taught me that certain fonts were used for specific purposes and I've been teaching this ever since.

Marketing Sherpa posted about this today, and included some specific numbers on comprehension:

"In 1984, the Newspaper Ad Bureau of Australia published a research pamphlet that should have been laminated and hung on the walls of every single marketing art department in the world.

In fact, to this day I think every graphic designer should be forced to take a quiz on this data before you allow them anywhere near your marketing design project.

Why? Because it spells out what typefaces and layout design people can read most easily ... and what's nearly impossible for the human eye to comprehend.

For example: Headlines set in Times New Roman upper and lower case have a 92% comprehension rate. However, headlines in sans serif type (think Arial) all caps cause a 59% drop in comprehension rate.

Another example: Reverse type, such as white lettering on a black background, has 0% good comprehension (that's right, zero.) Ink colors, such as bright red on a white

background, aren't much better at 10% good comprehension."

I can add the fact that there are two aspects to page layout and font selection which will enhance or degrade your document.

Comprehension is the depth of understanding attained by the reader. So using serif fonts (such as Times New Roman) for your text enhances the reader's comprehension. Your reader will have a more complete understanding of your document.

Legibility is the ability to understand/read lettering at speed or from a distance. San Serif fonts (such as Arial) were invented for restroom signs in German Train Stations.

Therefore, if you want the message to be delivered to a reader who is scanning or flipping pages, your headings in san serif font will better accomplish this than serif fonts. Your reader will more quickly find/see the heading.

Reversed text (white on colored field) is nasty for comprehension, and will actually reduce comprehension of surrounding text. Avoid this unless you want to reduce comprehension of some report, brochure or proposal. (Which you may have reason to want to do.)

Marketing Sherpa cited a book that documents the research that proves why you need to use care: *Type & Layout: Are You Communicating or Just Making Pretty Shapes'* by Colin Wheildon.

You be the judge:

Typeface: ITC New Baskerville

In 1984, the Newspaper Ad Bureau of Australia published a research pamphlet that should have been laminated and hung on the walls of every single marketing art department in the world.

In fact, to this day I think every graphic designer should be forced to take a quiz on this data before you allow them anywhere near your marketing design project.

Why? Because it spells out what typefaces and layout design people can read most easily ... and what's nearly impossible for the human eye to comprehend.

For example: Headlines set in Times New Roman upper and lower case have a 92% comprehension rate. However, headlines in sans serif type (think Arial) all caps cause a 59% drop in comprehension rate.

Another example: Reverse type, such as white lettering on a black background, has 0% good comprehension (that's right, zero.) Ink colors, such as bright red on a white background, aren't much better at 10% good comprehension.

One more example: 80% of readers will look at a vertical shape or graphic before they'll look at a horizontal one.

Does this data carry over to the Web? Whenever I ask Web designers for research about comprehension and online typography, they have told me they make choices based on what they see on most other sites. I guess designers think, "If everyone else is doing it, it must be right."

Marketing

Sherpa and other organizations (most notably the Poynter Institute, which studies what works for news-

paper publishing online and off) have conducted eyetracking tests that indicate certain broad rules about online design that works. (The fact that the eye skitters about fairly quickly and does not read everything on the page in order, nor often entire headlines or sentences from start to finish.)

However, to my knowledge, no one has conducted a specific study on online typography. Example: Are sans serif fonts used extensively online because science told us to do it, or is it just design habit based on a decade of common usage?

Solutions? Well, first of all, if you oversee or sign off on any print marketing materials, such as brochures, space ads, marcom, PDFs that are meant to be printed, etc., get yourself a copy of the 1984 study. Get your art director a copy, too.

It's now available as a paperback book at most major bookstores. Ask for the title, 'Type & Layout: Are You Communicating or Just Making Pretty Shapes' by Colin Wheildon.

Also, if you know of any true research (not just opinions without referenced data) on the topic of online typography please do post a reply to this blog so Sherpa's research department can look into it for everyone right away.

Third, we're strongly considering conducting our own research on the topic. It will be a giant undertaking, but I think well worth the work. Wouldn't it be nice to at last be able to walk into Web design meetings with data in your hands? So, watch this blog for a posting when we start the project. We'll definitely need test subjects to come into the lab and read Web pages to help us. If you'd like to volunteer, let us know.

You be the judge:

Typeface: Arial

In 1984, the Newspaper Ad Bureau of Australia published a research pamphlet that should have been laminated and hung on the walls of every single marketing art department in the world.

In fact, to this day I think every graphic designer should be forced to take a quiz on this data before you allow them anywhere near your marketing design project.

Why? Because it spells out what typefaces and layout design people can read most easily ... and what's nearly impossible for the human eye to comprehend.

For example: Headlines set in Times New Roman upper and lower case have a 92% comprehension rate. However, headlines in sans serif type (think Arial) all caps cause a 59% drop in comprehension rate.

Another example: Reverse type, such as white lettering on a black background, has 0% good comprehension (that's right, zero.) Ink colors, such as bright red on a white background, aren't much better at 10% good comprehension.

One more example: 80% of readers will look at a vertical shape or graphic before they'll look at a horizontal one.

Does this data carry over to the Web? Whenever I ask Web designers for research about comprehension and online typography, they have told me they make choices based on what they see on most other sites. I guess designers think, "If everyone else is doing it, it must be right."

MarketingSherpa and other organizations (most notably the Poynter Institute, which studies what works for newspaper publishing online and off)

have conducted eyetracking tests that indicate certain broad rules about online design that works. (The fact that the eye skitters about fairly quickly and does not read everything on the page in order, nor often entire headlines or sentences from start to finish.)

However, to my knowledge, no one has conducted a specific study on online typography. Example: Are sans serif fonts used extensively online because science told us to do it, or is it just design habit based on a decade of common usage?

Solutions? Well, first of all, if you oversee or sign off on any print marketing materials, such as brochures, space ads, marcom, PDFs that are meant to be printed, etc., get yourself a copy of the 1984 study. Get your art director a copy, too.

It's now available as a paperback book at most major bookstores. Ask for the title, 'Type & Layout: Are You Communicating or Just Making Pretty Shapes' by Colin Wheildon.

Also, if you know of any true research (not just opinions without referenced data) on the topic of online typography please do post a reply to this blog so Sherpa's research department can look into it for everyone right away.

Third, we're strongly considering conducting our own research on the topic. It will be a giant undertaking, but I think well worth the work. Wouldn't it be nice to at last be able to walk into Web design meetings with data in your hands? So, watch this blog for a posting when we start the project. We'll definitely need test subjects to come into the lab and read Web pages to help us. If you'd like to volunteer, let us know.

You be the judge:

Typeface: Verdana

In 1984, the Newspaper Ad Bureau of Australia published a research pamphlet that should have been laminated and hung on the walls of every single marketing art department in the world.

In fact, to this day I think every graphic designer should be forced to take a quiz on this data before you allow them anywhere near your marketing design project.

Why? Because it spells out what typefaces and layout design people can read most easily ... and what's nearly impossible for the human eye to comprehend.

For example: Headlines set in Times New Roman upper and lower case have a 92% comprehension rate. However, headlines in sans serif type (think Arial) all caps cause a 59% drop in comprehension rate.

Another example: Reverse type, such as white lettering on a black background, has 0% good comprehension (that's right, zero.) Ink colors, such as bright red on a white background, aren't much better at 10% good comprehension.

One more example: 80% of readers will look at a vertical shape or graphic before they'll look at a horizontal one.

Does this data carry over to the Web? Whenever I ask Web designers for research about comprehension and online typography, they have told me they make choices based on what they see on most other sites. I guess designers think, "If everyone else is doing it, it must be right."

MarketingSherpa and other organizations (most notably the Poynter Institute, which studies what works for newspaper publishing online and off) have conducted eyetracking tests that indicate certain broad rules about

online design that works. (The fact that the eye skitters about fairly quickly and does not read everything on the page in order, nor often entire headlines or sentences from start to finish.)

However, to my knowledge, no one has conducted a specific study on online typography. Example: Are sans serif fonts used extensively online because science told us to do it, or is it just design habit based on a decade of common usage?

Solutions? Well, first of all, if you oversee or sign off on any print marketing materials, such as brochures, space ads, marcom, PDFs that are meant to be printed, etc., get yourself a copy of the 1984 study. Get your art director a copy, too.

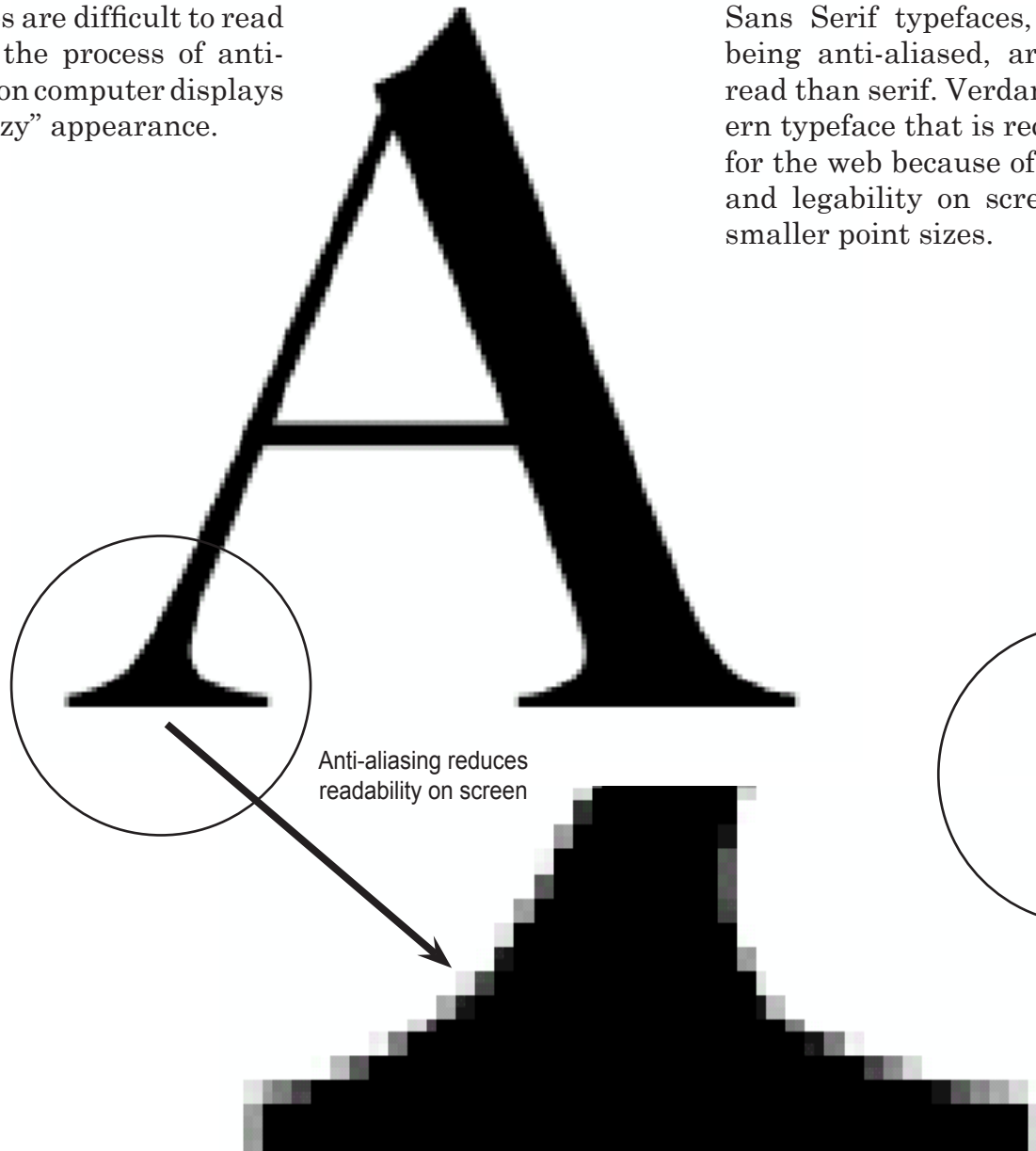
It's now available as a paperback book at most major bookstores. Ask for the title, 'Type & Layout: Are You Communicating or Just Making Pretty Shapes' by Colin Wheildon.

Also, if you know of any true research (not just opinions without referenced data) on the topic of online typography please do post a reply to this blog so Sherpa's research department can look into it for everyone right away.

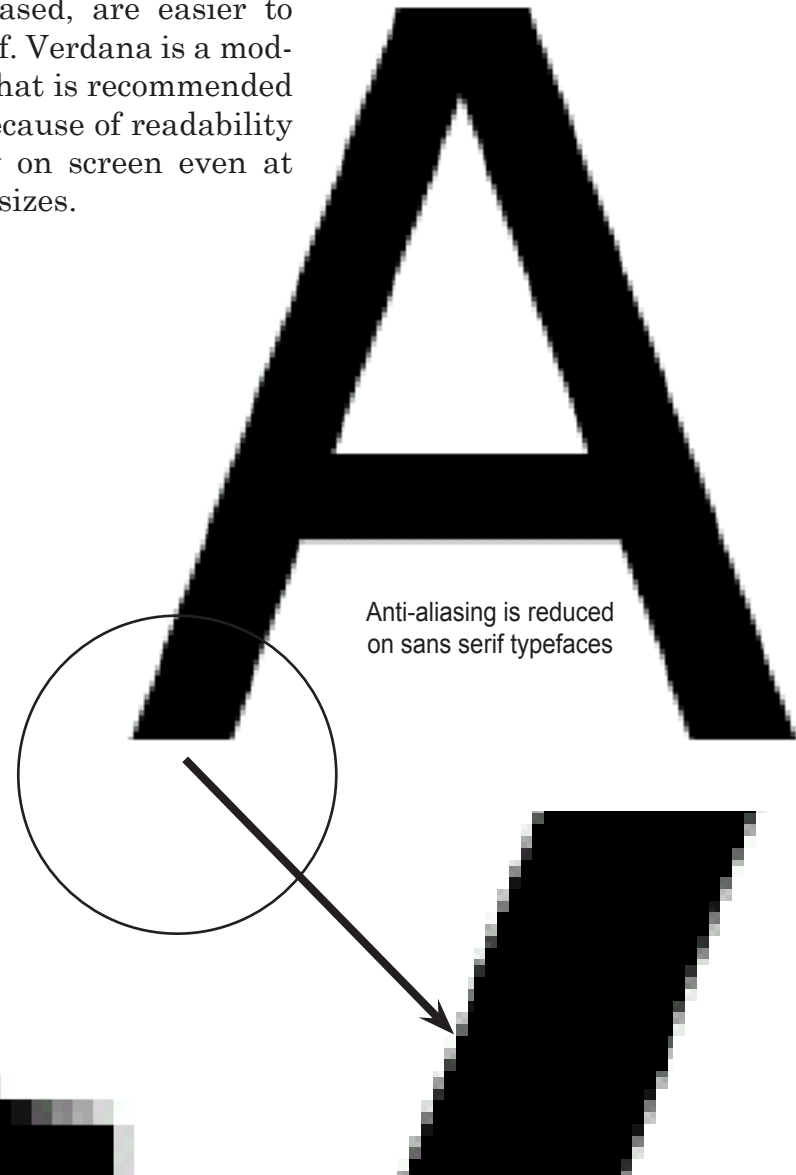
Third, we're strongly considering conducting our own research on the topic. It will be a giant undertaking, but I think well worth the work. Wouldn't it be nice to at last be able to walk into Web design meetings with data in your hands? So, watch this blog for a posting when we start the project. We'll definitely need test subjects to come into the lab and read Web pages to help us. If you'd like to volunteer, let us know.

Continuing the Serif or Sans Serif Debate on the Web

Serif typefaces are difficult to read on-screen as the process of anti-aliasing used on computer displays creates a “fuzzy” appearance.



Sans Serif typefaces, while still being anti-aliased, are easier to read than serif. Verdana is a modern typeface that is recommended for the web because of readability and legibility on screen even at smaller point sizes.



Digital Web Magazine – News – Serif vs. San-Serif

http://www.digital-web.com/news/2004/06/serif_vs_sanserif/

Microsoft O... Web Access Microsoft O... Web Access Boating Wea...land Waters https://web...u/exchange Clothing Labels – Woven

DIGITAL WEB MAGAZINE The web professional's online magazine of choice. (mt) mediatemple

home contribute subscribe contact about events

articles by topic
articles by date
articles by author
articles by title
articles by type

search
GO!

Free image each week
Advertise with us

Publishing services provided by [Blue Flavor](#)
Photos provided courtesy of [iStockPhoto.com](#)
Publication managed with the help of [Basecamp](#)

Serif vs. San-Serif

& [Nick Finck](#)
⌚ June 7, 2004 at 8:43 AM

[Add to Delicious](#) or [Add to My Yahoo!](#)

There is one rule in web design that we have [stated](#) many times before only to [debate it](#) and [debate it again](#). We even went so far as to [prove it](#) and then [defined it](#). I must admit serif typefaces look a lot better on a Mac with its aliasing, but that is about it... it looks better, it doesn't perform better. We remember that form always follows function right? So why are we still seeing designers who insist on using serif typefaces for the body of large blocks of text? I have no idea. If you disagree, post a comment here and prove me wrong with facts specifically devoted to online screen reading.

All Fonts
View & Print - Installed or not In one list with samples.

Free Fonts
View Free Fonts Latest Clothing, Shoes, Accessories

Ads by Google

Comments

& [Jonathan Baldwin](#)
⌚ June 7, 2004 at 9:09 AM

A student of mine recently investigated this issue from the point of view of a dyslexic, and came up with some interesting conclusions. Although much evidence from big research projects suggests that, from an accessibility point of view, san serif typefaces are better, on beige or pale coloured backgrounds, other evidence suggests that serifs allow the eye to determine differences between characters (lower-case l and upper-case I for example) in large bodies of text. Most of this research looks at print, of course.



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

navigation

- [Main page](#)
- [Contents](#)
- [Featured content](#)
- [Current events](#)
- [Random article](#)

interaction

- [About Wikipedia](#)
- [Community portal](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Make a donation](#)
- [Help](#)

search

toolbox

- [What links here](#)

- article**
- [discussion](#)
- [edit this page](#)
- [history](#)

Your *continued donations* keep Wikipedia running!

Sans-serif

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article or section cites very few or no references or sources.
 Please help [improve this article](#) by adding citations to [reliable sources](#). ([help](#), [get involved!](#))
 Any material not supported by sources may be challenged and removed at any time. This article has been tagged since **October 2006**.

In [typography](#), a **sans-serif** or **sans serif** (sometimes just **sans**) [typeface](#) is one that does not have the small features called "[serifs](#)" at the end of strokes. The term comes from the [French](#) word *sans*, meaning "without".

In print, sans-serif fonts are more typically used for headlines than for body text. The conventional wisdom is that serifs help guide the eye along the lines in large blocks of text. Sans-serifs however have acquired considerable acceptance for body text in [Europe](#).

Sans-serif fonts have become the de facto standard for body text on-screen, especially online because electronic screens (computer monitor or otherwise) provide a cleaner and more legible rendering of sans-serif fonts than they do for serif fonts. This is also true of typography on television; one will rarely see serif fonts used on a TV channel due to the flickering which can easily occur when they are employed.

Before the term "sans-serif" became standard in English typography, a number of other terms had been



| which is easily read by dyslexic people: serif or san serif | Typophile

http://typophile.com/node/29434

Microsoft O... Web Access Microsoft O... Web Access Boating Wea...land Waters https://web...u/exchange

FORUMS TYPOWIKI PROJECTS NEWS RESOURCES MEMBERS


SEARCH

TYPOPHILE

Home » forums » Design

which is easily read by dyslexic people: serif or san serif


missgiggles
11 November, 2006 - 7:51am



what evidence is there? has it been researched before?

[previous forum topic](#) | [next forum topic](#) | 1787 reads | [rss](#)

hrant
11 November, 2006 - 8:15am



Evidence: as usual in matters typographic, nothing good. So we're left with thought, and it seems to indicate that serifs help because they provide more info, including directional info (think of the tops of "b" and "d" for example).

hhp



Typeface Identification

- [Sans](#)
- [Serif](#)
- [Analog](#)

Font Tools

- [General](#)
- [Conversion](#)
- [Creation](#)
- [Kerning](#)
- [Management](#)
- [Manipulation](#)
- [Specimen](#)

Foundry Identification

Sans Serif Font Families

For many who work with type the hardest faces to keep straight are the sans serif families. A few of the best known and most widely used families of book faces are illustrated here side by side as an aid to identifying them. My favorite quick identification key for separating fonts into manageable groups is the Rookledge's International Typefinder, a modified version of which we are illustrating here. Another more comprehensive aid is Indentafont. Both books are very useful, but probably the fastest automated system is the Font Expert CD. **Our simplified version of the Rookledge system puts sans fonts into four main groups depending on the appearance of the upper case letter G.** If you don't have a specimen that includes this letter, you have to work harder. A list of spur serif families is included at the end because at small point sizes the spurs become almost invisible and it is easy to mistake the face for a san serif. If you want to practice type identification, you can print out these pages, cut it into horizontal strips with no names and pull them randomly out of the pile.

Identifying a Sans Serif Font