

TYPE BASICS

BASIC DEFINITIONS BY STEVEN ASBURY

POINT SIZE

Using point size as a measurement of type dates back to the 18th century. It measures not the size of the letters, but the size of the metal block that was used to print those letters.

100 points



gl

X-HEIGHT

Size of a lower-case letter within that printing block.

Both of the examples below are 100-point type. See the difference in the actual size of the letters? On the left is Garamond and on the right is Bookman.



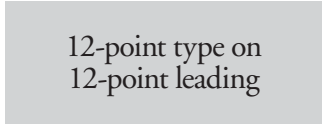
X



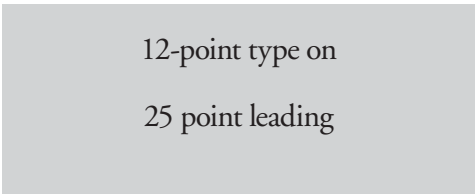
X

LEADING

Space between two lines of type.



12-point type on
12-point leading



12-point type on
25 point leading

KERNING AND TRACKING

Tracking is the overall spacing between letters in an entire word, sentence or paragraph. Kerning is the specific spacing between 2 letters.



XX

Tracking set at 0



XX

Tracking set at 100

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SERIF

Serif typefaces have “feet” at the bases of the letterforms.

serif type



SANS-SERIF

Sans serif typefaces have no feet – also called serifs. In fact, “sans serif” literally means “without serifs.”

sans-serif type



SCRIPT

Script faces often appear in wedding invitations and announcements, although they can be used on a limited basis in mainstream publications.

script type



NOVELTY

Use these faces sparingly as they tend call a lot of attention to themselves and quickly become cliches. When used improperly, they can easily make your project look amateurish.

novelty type



TYPE BASICS

SOME GOOD FONTS TO USE BY STEVEN ASBURY

THE CLASSICS

Here are some “classics.” Like the “little black dress,” these typefaces never go out of style. They add class to any design project.

Bodoni
Didot
Caslon
Century
Futura
Franklin Gothic
Garamond
Gill Sans
Goudy
Univers

TYPEFACES TO AVOID

My least favorites. They're dated (or just ugly).

Brush Script (unless you're doing a 1950s poster)
Chicago, Geneva, or any other 1980s font named after a city
Arial and Geneva (Helvetica knock-offs)
Times and Times New Roman (too overused)
Courier (lacks personality, try American Typewriter instead)
Hobo and other novelty faces

WHAT'S HOT FOR 2008

Gotham

Didot

Officina

Chapparral