

One Typeface,  
MANY FONTS

A Guide to Roman  
& *Italic Designs*

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First, a few corrections and additions:

COLOPHON—(1) The trade emblem or device of a printer or publisher. (2) A page sometimes found at the end of a book, listing details pertaining to production of the book and/or the printer's imprint.

CROSS STROKE—horizontal stroke.

ETAOIN SHRDLU—A typographer's sign to indicate a mistake. Originally the first line of a Linotype keyboard (which was arranged by letter frequency) these keys would be struck in the event of an error in setting the line to fill it out so that it might be cast and discarded.

GUTTER—in binding, the blank space where two pages meet. Also, the blank space between columns of type.

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MARGIN—the unprinted area around the edges of a page. The margins as designated in book specifications refer to the remaining margins after the book has been trimmed.

SMALL CAPITALS—capitals redrawn and sized to match the proportions of lower-case letters. Usually the same height as the x-height, or only slightly taller. A full-size capital shrunk to this size is too thin and light. Used for abbreviations within text, sub-titles & c.

TYPOGRAPHY—the art or craft of setting type to improve understanding of the text.

ref. Rauri McLean,

*Thames & Hudson Manual of Typography,*

Robert Bringhurst,

*The Elements of Typographic Style.*

Corrections courtesy Mac McGrew

& Dr. Richard McClintock

Originally, a typeface design was a thing unto itself, with texts being set in roman, or italic (or Fraktur, Rotunda or Schwabacher), but never mixing either. Italics originally used upright capitals however, which provided a useful contrast at need. In the 16th century, typographers began using italics in roman texts for emphasis, or to pick out foreign words, a practice which continues to this day, despite certain efforts to the contrary.

Other languages, naturally, have other conventions, German being notable for having two separate fonts as well, Fraktur, literally *broken script*, and Schwabacher, *rounded script*, which were used to good effect in older texts to differentiate language usage. A single typeface family (as opposed to superfamily, such as Lucida or Stone) may contain the following:

# TITLING CAPITALS

ROMAN CAPITALS

& LINING FIGURES 0123456789

ROMAN SMALL CAPITALS

roman lowercase letters

& old-style figures 0123456789

alternate roman characters

*SLOPED/ITALIC CAPITALS*

*℘ Lining Figures 0123456789*

*Alternate Swash Characters*

*italic lowercase letters*

*℘ italic old-style figures 0123456789*

& ornaments ☪ ☳ ☴ ☵



Some typefaces will also have italic small capitals, and in certain instances, an obliqued or slanted roman as well as a true italic. This latter convention is most appropriate to fonts intended for setting mathematics, but is all-too often done in ignorance of the true nature of italic. It bears noting that an italic is not such simply because of its slant, but because of its structure, which is derived from handwriting.

Shown above, but not specifically referenced, were ligatures. Most roman type designs have *f*s which kern, or hang over into the boundaries of the following character. Normally, this is not a difficulty, but some collisions do occur, hence, the ligatures *ff* , *fi* , *fl* , *ffi* and *ffl*. Non-kerning *f*s do exist, with Linotype being noted (or notorious) for making them, their rationale being that it facilitates letterspacing lowercase text.

Other ligatures include the ampersand, & (a ligature of the Latin word for and, *et*), the German double-s, *eszett*, or sharp-s, ß, which grew out of the long-s which was used in the middle of words, and the purely decorative & and & ligatures, holdovers from Chancery calligraphy.

A typeface will also include a number of characters which are not intuitively available from a typewriter keyboard. As any good style manual will indicate (e. g. *The Chicago Manual of Style* prior to the 13th edition) these must be used. Two hyphens do not make an em-dash—nor is a single hyphen suitable to stand in for an en-dash. Most applications will automatically place apostrophes and quotation marks (but be certain to use an apostrophe to indicate omission '*Struth*') but few will correctly use prime marks (i.e. ' ") to indicate units of measure.

Similarly, the sign,  $\times$  , not an  $x$  should be used, when indicating dimensions, or multiplication. Fractions should be built using a solidus and superscript and subscript numbers from an expert font (e.g.  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ), not alluded to with lining figures separated by a slash.

Two recent font technologies have attempted to address these issues: Apple's QuickDraw/GX and Adobe/Microsoft's OpenType. Apple's effort is to be revived in their nascent Mac OS X as ATSUI (Apple Typographic System for Unicode Information), while Microsoft's attempt seems typical of work produced by committee. OpenType is notable however, for having enlisted the aid of Prof. Hermann Zapf in creating a new version of Palatino to be distributed as the first OpenType font.