



# Typography basics

<http://www.as8.it/handouts/typography-basics.pdf>

I/6

fig. 1

## BASIC-SHAPE GROUPS



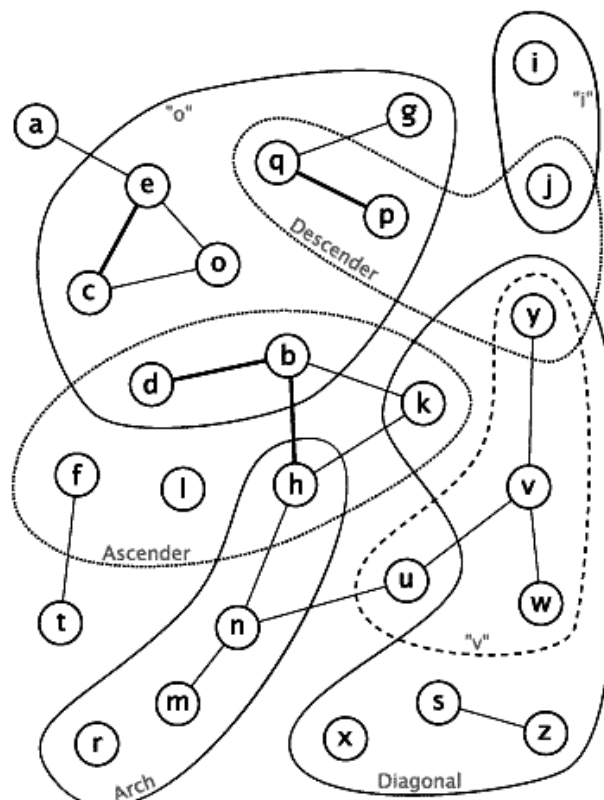
fig. 2

## LETTERS RELATIONSHIPS



fig. 3

## MODULES + SIMILARS



## QUOTES

“Typography is two-dimensional architecture, based on experience and imagination, and guided by rules and readability. And this is the purpose of typography: The arrangement of design elements within a given structure should allow the reader to easily focus on the message, without slowing down the speed of his reading.”

*Hermann Zapf*

“Since typography is a communication method that utilizes a gathering of related subjects and methodologies that includes sociology, linguistics, psychology, aesthetics, and so much more – we aim to educate that there is no single approach within typography that applies to everything.”

*Shelley Gruendler*

“Because a type designer does not draw letters. A type designer designs words and words are structures that contain patterns of black and white shapes, form and counterform. It is a game that deals with space and rhythm. Which is precisely what, for me, is the essence of drawing.”

*Cyrus Highsmith*

“... It is not surface, it is not the last thing that needs to be considered, it is the thing itself.”

*Stephen Fry*



# Type Glossary

<http://www.owlsoup.com/foamtrain/glossary>

**BODY SIZE** In hot type, the vertical size of the body. This was originally measured from the top of the ‘d’ ascender to the bottom of the ‘p’ descender. This measurement evolved into what is considered the point size of type (1 pt = 0.353 mm = 1/72 inch): the measurement of a particular type size in whatever point units are being used, anyhow, the height of the scaled font bounding box. (But if the ‘d’ ascender top and ‘p’ descender bottom are not the farthest away from the baseline of any character extremity, the bounding box method yields a different result. Most fonts do not adhere to any specific sizing guidelines, although some type foundries do have a consistent set of guidelines across their product lines).

<http://font.hu/alhtml/morpho.html>

**GLYPH** The actual shape (*bit pattern, outline*) of a character image. For example, an italic ‘a’ and a roman ‘a’ are two different glyphs representing the same underlying character. In this strict sense, any two images which differ in shape constitute different glyphs (and different Unicode position is a font). In this usage, ‘glyph’ is a synonym for ‘character image,’ or simply ‘image.’

**LETTER** A unit which is used to write words or expressions. Letters are represented by characters and have two general categories: *alphabetic* (letterform) and *ideographic* (ideograph). Both categories also include characters which are formally in those categories, but are usually mixed together in usage and not colloquially usually considered as such, such as numerals (*figure*), punctuation, and other symbols.

**TEXT** The content of human-readable language, as displayed on a page or on-screen. Because the appearance and consistency of text can vary with the writing system and language (for example, glyphs consisting of alphabetic letterforms, hieroglyphics, ideographs, petroglyphs), the size of the text for optimum comprehension varies.

Factors such as the reproduction medium [digital display, CRT (Cathode Ray Tube) or LCD screen, paper, parchment, transparency], typeface style, physical colors of the background and text, any text motion, lexical architecture of the particular language, and other factors are influential.

For text comprised of alphabetic letters, using a typical serif typeface designed for text reproduction, in a human language using alphabetic letter glyphs and having word “gestalts,” approximately 11.5 points is the optimal size.

This is based on the geometry of the human eye and how the brain works. Languages using more complex glyphs (hieroglyphs, ideographs) may require larger text sizes.

**TYPEFACE** A system of distinctive, visually consistent design for the symbols in an alphabet, a complete set of characters, yet the impression of printing on the page. *Typefaces*, like humans, grow in families—the basic set is made of three cuts: *Roman*, *Italic* and *Bold*.

*Fonts*, differently, are a collection of bit-mapped data or computer language instructions (*software*) which render glyph images on some output device.

Basically, a font is a library of glyphs used as a tool (sometimes a collection of differently formatted files is sold as “a font,” which really means “a font package.” An example of this would be a T1, *PostScript* font, this package usually contains a so-called *screen font*, one or more *metrics* files, and the actual PostScript outline printer font).

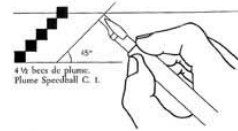
fig. 4

# CALLIGRAPHIC STYLES

## Capital Roman

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z

## Gothic



a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p

## Rustic

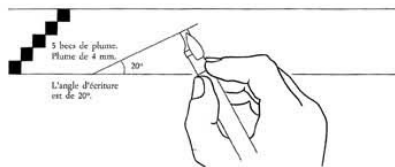


A B C D E F G H

## Renaissance

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

## Oncial



A B C D E F

## Italic Chancery

a n a b c e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

## Carolingia

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p

## Italic Contemporary

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 &

## English Semioncial

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p

## Copperplate

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n n o p q r s t u v w x y z

fig. 5

TYPEFACE ANATOMY

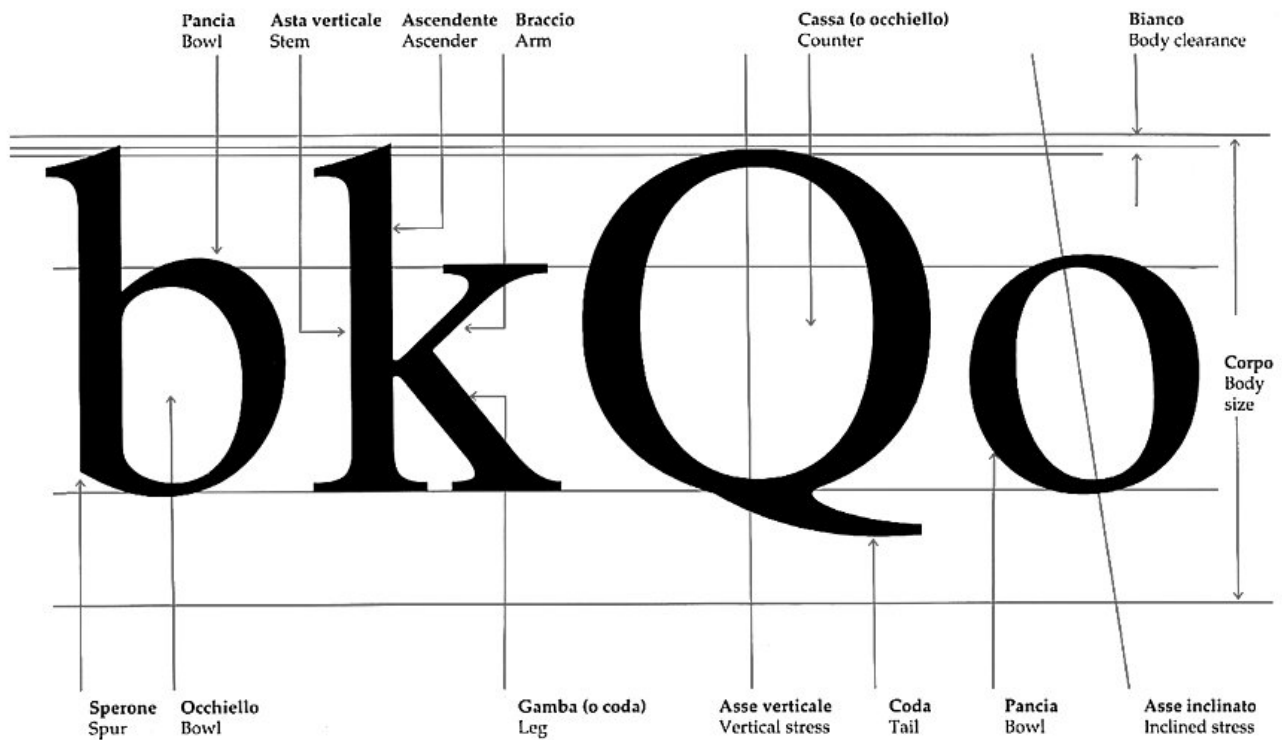
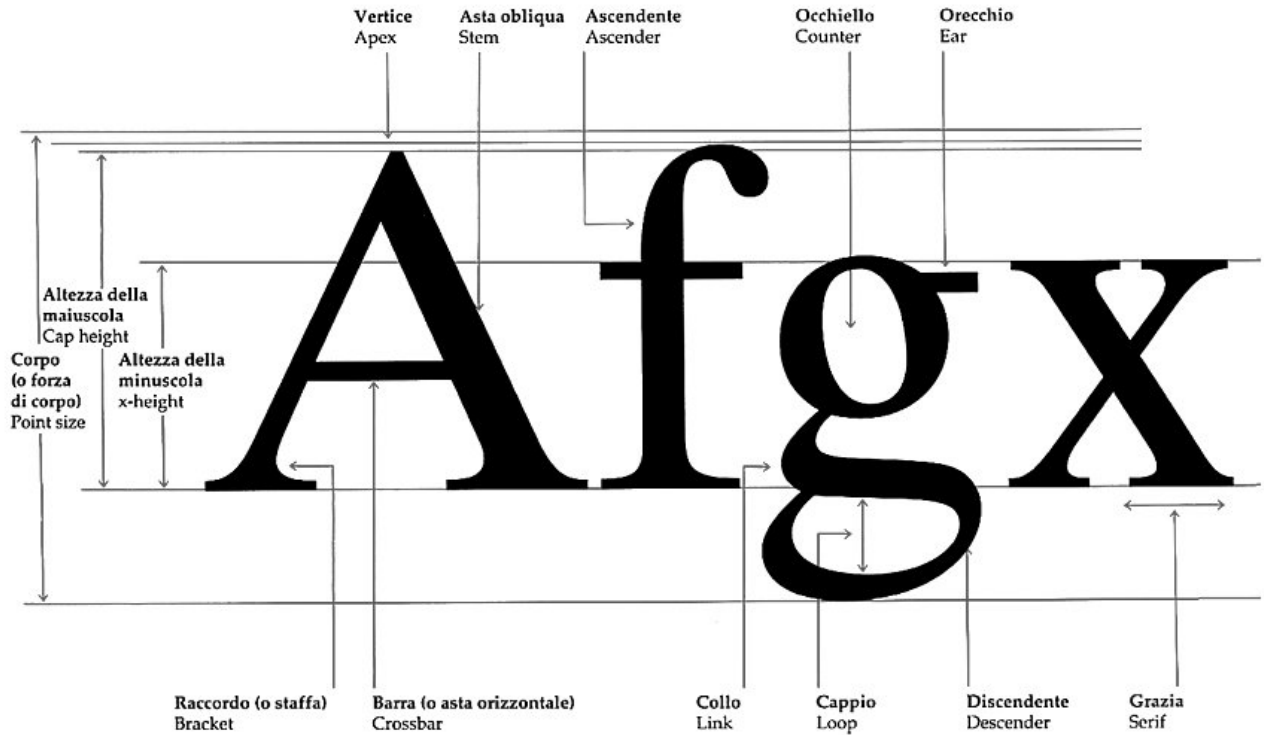
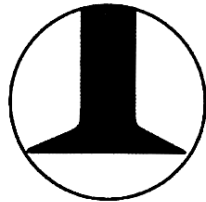


fig. 6

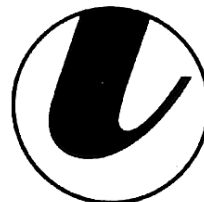
NOVARESE CLASSIFICATION – BASED ON SERIF SHAPE

[http://typophile.com/typeface\\_classification\\_schemes](http://typophile.com/typeface_classification_schemes)

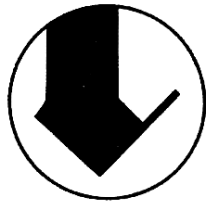
LAPIDARI



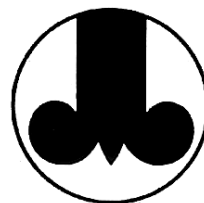
*Scritti*



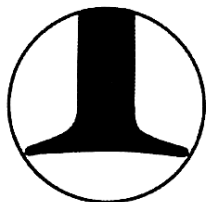
Medioevali



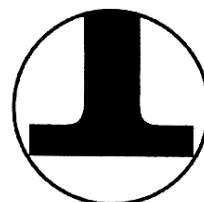
ORNATI



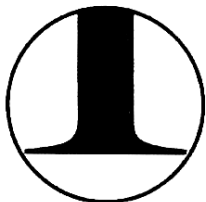
VENEZIANI



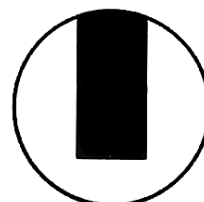
EGIZIANI



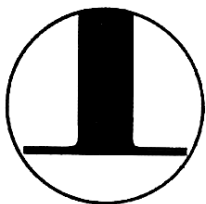
TRANSIZIONALI



LINEARI



BODONIANI



**FANTASIE**

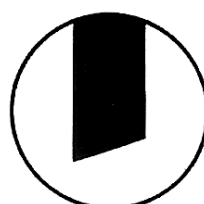




fig. 7

BRINGHURST'S HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS

<http://typophile.com/node/12145>

Renaissance  
14-16 centuries

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Baroque  
17-18 centuries

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Neoclassic  
mid 18 century

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Romantic  
late 18 century

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Realist  
late 19 century

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Modernist, Geometric  
beginning 20 century

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Modernist, Lyric  
20 century

abppfoe  
abppfoe

Postmodern  
mid 20 century

abppfoe  
abppfoe