

# Typography and Design Vocabulary

**Subject:** Multimedia and Webpage Design

**Language:** English

**Book:** Last Updated on 1/15/2016

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## 1 Introduction

**Design** Decisions about the look, function, and structure of text and graphics in a publication.

## 2 Typography

**Font** A set of characters - letters, numbers, punctuation, and other symbols - that share the same typographic style. Examples: Arial, Courier, and Times New Roman.

**Font Effect** Any of several graphical effects that change how a font displays. Examples: Small Caps, Strikethrough, Subscript, and Superscript. See also: Font Style.

**Font Family** A set of related fonts created in a similar typographic style but differing in at least one classification area. Example: The set of Arial, Arial Narrow, and Arial Black.

**Font Size** The size of characters displayed in a publication. The higher the value, the larger the characters will appear. Measured in Points.

**Font Style** The slant and weight of a font. Examples: Bold and Italic. See also: Font Effect.

**Typeface** The design features shared by every glyph in a font. Examples: Ornamental, Proportional, Serif, and Wide.

**Typography** The study of the design and presentation of characters.

## 3 Typeface Classifications

**Blackletter** Any typeface resembling blackletter calligraphy from the mid 1400s in Germany when the printing press was invented. Same as Gothic. Examples: Textualis, Rotunda, Schwabacher, and Fraktur.

**Decorative** Any typeface that is festive or decorative. For use in headlines and at larger sizes. Same as Novelty or Ornamental. Examples: Curlz, Chiller, and Jokerman.

**Dingbat** Any typeface that contains small typographical glyphs or images instead of characters. For use in accenting or adding decoration to text. Same as Picture, Symbol, and Icon. Examples: WebDings and WingDings.

**Monospaced** Any typeface containing characters that all have the same width. For use with documents that require exact text line lengths. Same as Fixed-Width and Fixed-Pitch. Examples: Courier and Courier New.

**Proportional** Any typeface containing characters of varying widths. Examples: OpenType, FreeType, PostScript, and TrueType Fonts.

**Sans Serif** Any font containing characters whose defining feature is having clean edges without serifs. Typically used for headlines and titles on printed materials. Example: Arial and Calibri.

**Script** Any typeface containing characters whose defining feature is connected letters. Typically used for formal invitations or when handwriting, calligraphy, or a paintbrush style is preferred. Examples: Edwardian Script, Freestyle Script, and French Script.

**Serif** Any font containing characters whose defining feature is having serifs for easier readability. Typically used for body text on printed materials. Example: Times New Roman and Cambria.

## 4 Font Metrics

**Ascender** The part of a lowercase letter that extends above the baseline. Includes the letters b, d, f, h, k, l, and t.

**Baseline** The imaginary line on which typed text rests. Parts of letters below or above the baseline are called ascenders and descenders.

**Descender** The part of a lowercase letter that extends below the baseline. Includes the letters g, j, p, q, and y.

**Em** A typographical unit of measure equal to the width of the capital letter M.

**En** A typographical unit of measure equal to half an em.

**X Height** The height of all lowercase characters.

## 5 Font Spacing

**Kerning** Horizontal spacing between specific character pairs when found in sequence. Applied over and above base character spacing. Example: WA in WATER.

**Leading** Vertical spacing between lines of text. Same as Line-Spacing.

**Tracking** Horizontal spacing between all characters. Same as Character-Spacing.

## 6 Color Models

**CMYK** Short for Cyan-Magenta-Yellow-Black. A subtractive color model used in color printing by adding Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black pigment to a background, usually white paper. Same as CMY.

**Color Model** A system for mixing a set of base colors to create a full spectrum of all possible colors.

**RGB** Short for Red-Green-Blue. An additive color model used with electronic displays by mixing Red, Green, and Blue light values.

## 6.5 XXX COLOR XXX

**Color Palette** A selection of available colors based on a color model. Used to pick colors.

**Color Wheel** An arrangement of hues around a circle to show the relationships between colors.

**Complementary Colors** Colors on opposite sides of a color wheel that produce a neutral color when mixed together. Same as Opposite Colors.

## 7 Color Theory

**Color Theory** Knowledge of color mixing and the visual impact of color choices on design.

**Hue** The primary property of colors by which they are named and that distinguishes one color from another. Examples: Red, Blue, Yellow, Green, etc.

**Luminosity** A subjective property of colors that describes its perceived brightness along a lightness–darkness axis. Produces Tints and Shades. Same as Brightness, Lightness, and Value.

**Saturation** A subjective property of colors that describes its perceived concentration along an intense–dull axis. Produces Tones. Same as Colorfulness or Purity.

**Shades** Darker versions of the same color made by mixing with black. The Luminosity varies but Hue and Saturation remain constant.

**Tints** Lighter versions of the same color made by mixing with white. The Luminosity varies but Hue and Saturation remain constant.

**Tones** More colorful or dull versions of the same color made by mixing with gray. The Saturation varies but Hue and Luminosity remain constant.

## 8 Design Elements

**Color** The visual property of an object that can be described in terms of Hue, Saturation, and Lightness.

**Mass** The spacial property of an object that can be described in terms of length, height, and depth.

**Shape** The visual-spatial property of an object that can be described in terms of points, lines, curves, and angles. Same as Form.

**Texture** The perceived surface quality of an object.

## 9 Design Principles

**Alignment** A design principle that aligns objects relative to one another and the page margins in both the horizontal and vertical dimensions.

**Balance** The harmonious arrangement of parts or elements in a project's design.

**Connotation** The emotion or feeling evoked by seeing a particular Word, Phrase, Color, Texture, or Pattern.

**Consistency** Visual coherence among parts and objects. Same as Unity.

**Contrast** The difference in color and light that makes an object distinguishable from another nearby object or the background. Determined by the difference in the color and brightness of the object and other objects within the same field of view.

**Focal Point** The center of interest or attention where the viewer's eyes focus when seeing a publication for the first time. The default location is the Optical Center.

**Geometric Center** The horizontal and vertical center of a publication. In rectangular layouts, it's where the diagonal lines drawn from the corners cross.

**Optical Center** A point a little above the geometric center of a publication.

**Proximity** The nearness of objects to one another in a publication.

**Repetition** Repeating the same design element over and over in a publication.

**White Space** An area of empty space between objects on a page used to focus the reader's attention or aid the reader in absorbing the information.

## 10 Advanced Design Principles

**Aesthetics** The study of the nature of beauty, good taste, and artistic expression and how humans perceive, interpret, and relate to design choices.

**Critique** To objectively evaluate a creation and offer constructive feedback for improvement. Not to be confused with Criticize.

**Layout** The arrangement of objects relative to one another in a publication.

**Rule of Thirds** A guideline in photography wherein an image should be imagined as divided into nine equal parts and that important compositional elements should be placed along these lines or their intersections.

**Symmetry** The arrangement of the elements of a whole in a balanced distribution on either side of a dividing line or plane or around a central point or axis.

**Target Audience** The intended group for which something is created or marketed.

**Theme** A recurring idea that is evident throughout a publication or project.

**Z Pattern** In western cultures, the path the eye follows when looking at the printed page: Left-to-Right and Top-to-Bottom in the shape of a repeating letter Z.

## 11 Prototyping

**Color Scheme** The set of colors used throughout a publication to maintain a consistent design. Sets the mood of the publication. Examples: Primary, Secondary, Complementary (Opposite), Warms, Cools, Pastels, etc.

**Font Scheme** The set of fonts used throughout a publication to maintain a consistent design.

**Greeking** Text or graphic lines representing text inserted in a publication to reserve space for text to be inserted later. Used when prototyping basic layout ideas.

**Picture Placeholder** An object or graphic frame inserted in a publication to reserve space for a picture to be inserted later. Used when prototyping basic layout ideas. Similar to Greeking.

**Proof Print** An approximation of how a final publication will look.

**Prototype** A sketch of a publication used by a designer to arrange the layout of text and graphics in the final version.

**Specification Sheet** Formatting instructions for laying out a document. Spec Sheet for short.

**Style** The way something is said, done, expressed, or performed.

**Style Guide** A sheet that contains type specifications and format definitions for different categories of text in a publication. Same as Stylesheet.