

TYPOGRAPHY TERMS

ANTI-ALIASING Semi-transparent pixels along the edges of letterform outlines to smooth jagged edges	ANTIQUA / ANTIKVA Serif typefaces designed between 16th–17th century (or new designs following the style)	APERTURE The opening of a partially enclosed counter shape	APEX Point at the top of a letterform where two strokes meet	ARC Curved part of a letterform leading into a straight stem	ARM A stroke that doesn't connect to another stroke or stem on one or both ends	ASCENDER On lowercase letters the vertical stroke that extends above the x-height	ASCENDER LINE Invisible line marking the height of all ascenders in a font	AXIS / STRESS Invisible line dissecting the glyph from top to bottom at its thinnest point	BALL TERMINAL Terminal with a circular shape	BASELINE Invisible line on which the letters in a font rest	BEAK Decorative stroke at the end of the arm of a letter, similar to a serif but more pronounced	BILATERAL SERIF Serif extending to both sides of a main stroke	BOWL Fully closed rounded part of a letter	BRACKET Curved or wedge-like connection between the stem and serif of some fonts
CAP HEIGHT Height of a capital letter measured from the baseline	CONDENSED Type style designed with narrow width proportions	COUNTER An area partially or entirely enclosed in a letterform or symbol like an 'o', 'p' or 'c'	CROSS STROKE The horizontal stroke across a lowercase 't' or 'f'	CROSSBAR Horizontal stroke like the middle of an 'H', 'A' and 'e'	CROTCH Inside angle where two strokes meet	CURSIVE Handwriting with joined-up letters. Can be used to describe an italic font which is similar to handwriting	DESCENDER Parts of lowercase letters that extend below the baseline	DESCENDER LINE Invisible line marking the lowest part of the descenders	DISPLAY FONT Typefaces used for large type like banners and headlines	EAR Small stroke extending from the bowl of a lowercase 'g' or 'r'	EYE Enclosed space in a lowercase 'e' similar to a counter	FINIAL Tapered or curved end on letters like the bottom of a 'c' or 'e' or the top of a double storey 'a'	FLAG Horizontal stroke on the figure '5'	FOOT The part of a stem that rests on the baseline
GADZOOK An embellishment in a ligature that is not originally part of either letter	GLYPH A single character (number, letter, mark or symbol) is represented by a glyph	GROTESK German name for sans serif	HAIRLINE The lightest font family weight name; can refer to thinnest stroke of a letter	HALBFETT German name for the semi-bold weight in a type family	HEAD SERIF Half serif at the top starting point of the letterform	HINTING Data instructions within a font to help it render clearly at varying sizes	HOOK Curved stroke in a lowercase 'f'	INK TRAP Areas of the counter are opened to allow for ink to spread, avoiding dark spots	ITALIC Slanted to the right unlike roman typefaces which are upright	JOINT / JUNCTURE Where a stroke joins a stem	KERNING Adjustments to the space between pairs of letters, used to correct spacing problems in combinations like 'VA'	LEADING / LINESPACING Vertical space between lines of text, from baseline to baseline	LEG Downward sloping stroke on a 'k' and 'R'	LIGATURE Two or more letters joined together to form one glyph
LINK / NECK The link connecting the top and bottom bowls of a lowercase 'g'	LOOP / LOBE A rounded enclosed or partially-enclosed projecting stroke	MIDLINE Invisible line resting on the body of the lowercase letters	OBLIQUE / SLANTED Slanted typeface, mechanically sheared unlike italics which are drawn and crafted separately	OLDSTYLE / HANGING FIGURES Numbers aligned with the lowercase, traditionally used for body text setting	OVERSHOOT A round or pointed letter extends higher or lower than a flat letter to make it optically appear the same size	PICA A unit of measure corresponding to 12 points or pixels	POINT A unit of measure corresponding 1/12 of a pica or 1 pixel	POINT SIZE The size of the body of each character in a font	PRO Support additional languages including Central European and Cyrillic and/or Greek	RASTERIZATION Converting an image from vector to raster (pixels or dots)	ROMAN Standard type style or regular weight of an upright typeface	SERIF Small stroke at the beginning or end of main strokes of a letter	SHOULDER Curved part in a lowercase 'h', 'm' and 'n'	SINGLE-TIER When an 'a' or 'g' has one counter rather than two
SMALL CAPS Capitals which are a similar height to the lowercase, designed for abbreviation and emphasis in texts	SPACING Horizontal space on the side of each character	SPINE The main curve in 'S' and 's'	SPUR Small protruding part off a main stroke	SPURLESS Curves transition into straight stems without a spur	STEM A vertical stroke in a character	SWASH Exaggerated decorative serif, terminal or tail	TAIL The descending stroke of the letter 'Q'	TAPER Thinner and refined end of a stroke	TERMINAL The end of any stroke that doesn't have a serif	TITTLE The dot on the 'i' and the 'j'	TRACKING Spacing added to or removed from groups of letters outside the original spacing and kerning specified within a font file	VERTEX The point where two strokes meet at the bottom of a character	WEIGHT The heaviness of a typeface, independent of its size; can refer to a style within a font family (Thin or Regular)	X-HEIGHT Height of the lowercase 'x' which is used as a guideline for the height of unextended lowercase letters