

# **Introductions & Seductions**

**Richard Rutter, Clearleft**

Frontier 2016 · London

Hello. It's great to be here at Frontier. I hope you've enjoyed the day.

**Richard Rutter, Clearleft**

@clagnut

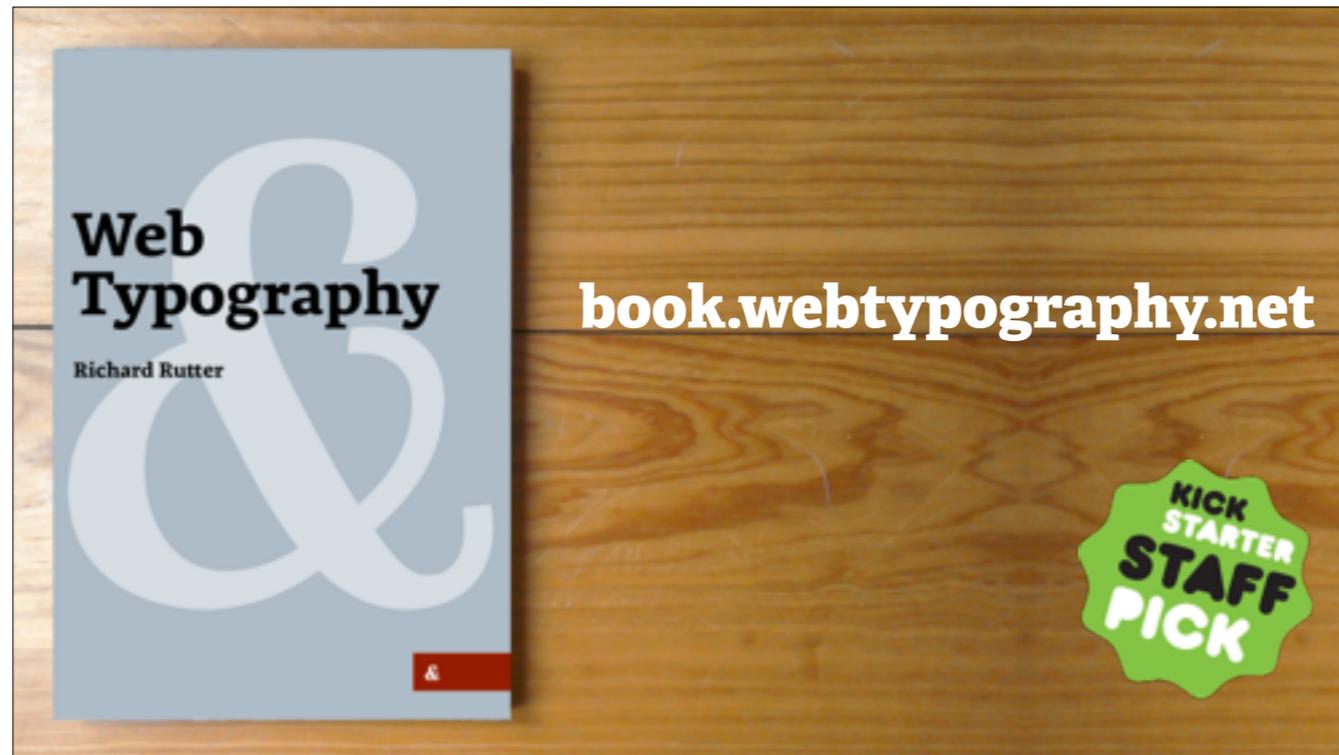
rich@clearleft.com

Slides: [speakerdeck.com/clagnut](https://speakerdeck.com/clagnut)

My name's Richard. I'm a web designer and I love type.  
I'll be putting all the slides online here.  
Feel free to contact me afterwards.



I cofounded Clearleft, a user-centred design studio in Brighton.



I'm writing a book at the moment.  
Thank you to my backers – I know there are some of you in the audience.  
I promise I'm making progress!



This is my favourite view of Brighton. Not the view from our office, but not far off. This is here to remind me that you're between me and beer.

But I'm not here to talk to you pubs or beer, I'm here to talk to you about typography on the web.

And with it a call to arms, which I'll get to shortly.



First of all I'd like to introduce you to this man.

This is of course Oliver Reichenstein.

Nine years ago he presented us designers with a call to arms. He infamously wrote that:

iA

WEB DESIGN IS 95% TYPOGRAPHY

19 October 2006

95% of the information on the web is written language. It is only logical to say that a web designer should get good training in the main discipline of shaping written information, in other words: Typography.

**“It is only logical to say that a web designer should get good training in typography.”**

Oliver Reichenstein, *Web Design is 95% Typography*  
<https://ia.net/know-how/the-web-is-all-about-typography-period>

**Web design is 95% typography.**

It is only logical to say that a web designer should get good training in the main discipline of shaping written information, in other words: Typography

**Every web designer should be trained in typography.**

That was in 2006 remember, 3 years before web fonts came along.



Photo: Indra Kupferschmid

And when most of the written web still looks like this, you could say he's right. Uninspiring, uninviting, unreadable SAMENESS.



This is my friend the designer Jon Tan.

According to Mr Tan, typography can broadly be split into **two** disciplines:



Billboards...



...and Novels.

*INTERR  
UPTION*

Immersion



Or reading... and impact

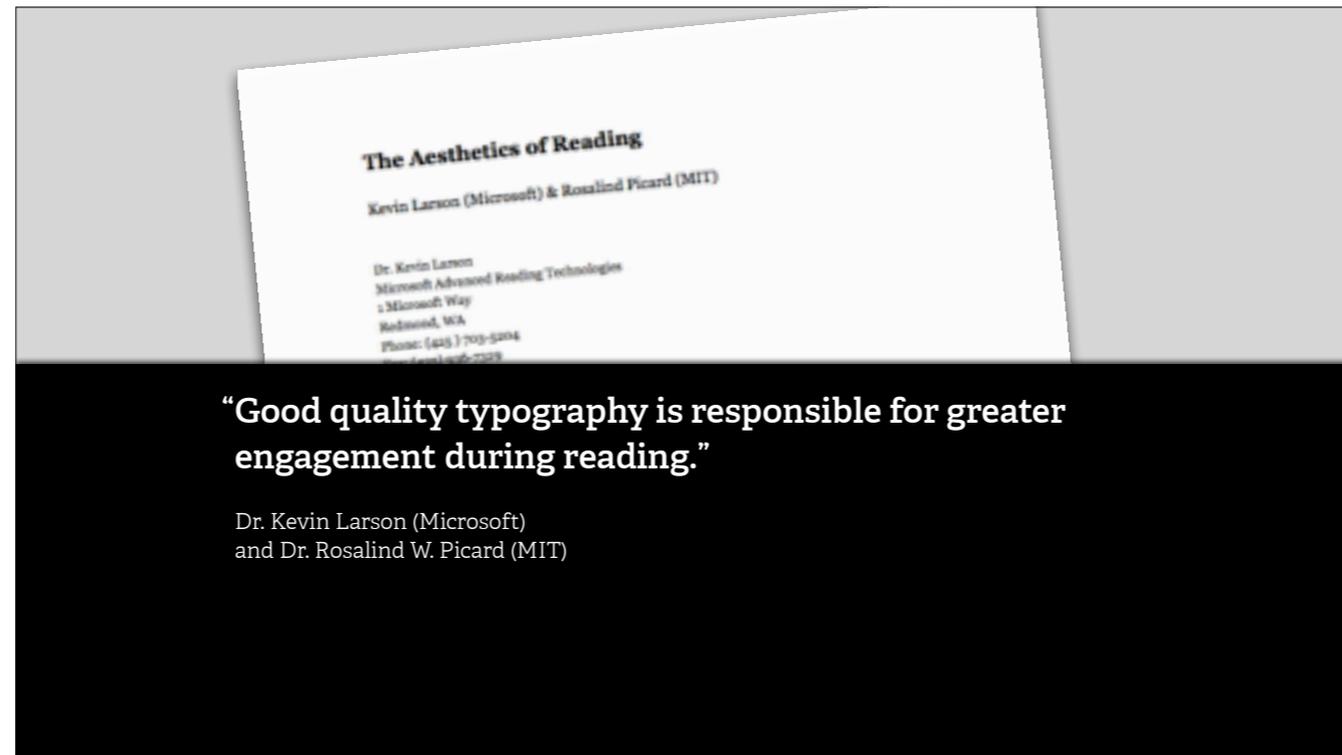


Just now Elliot talked a lot about setting text for immersive reading.

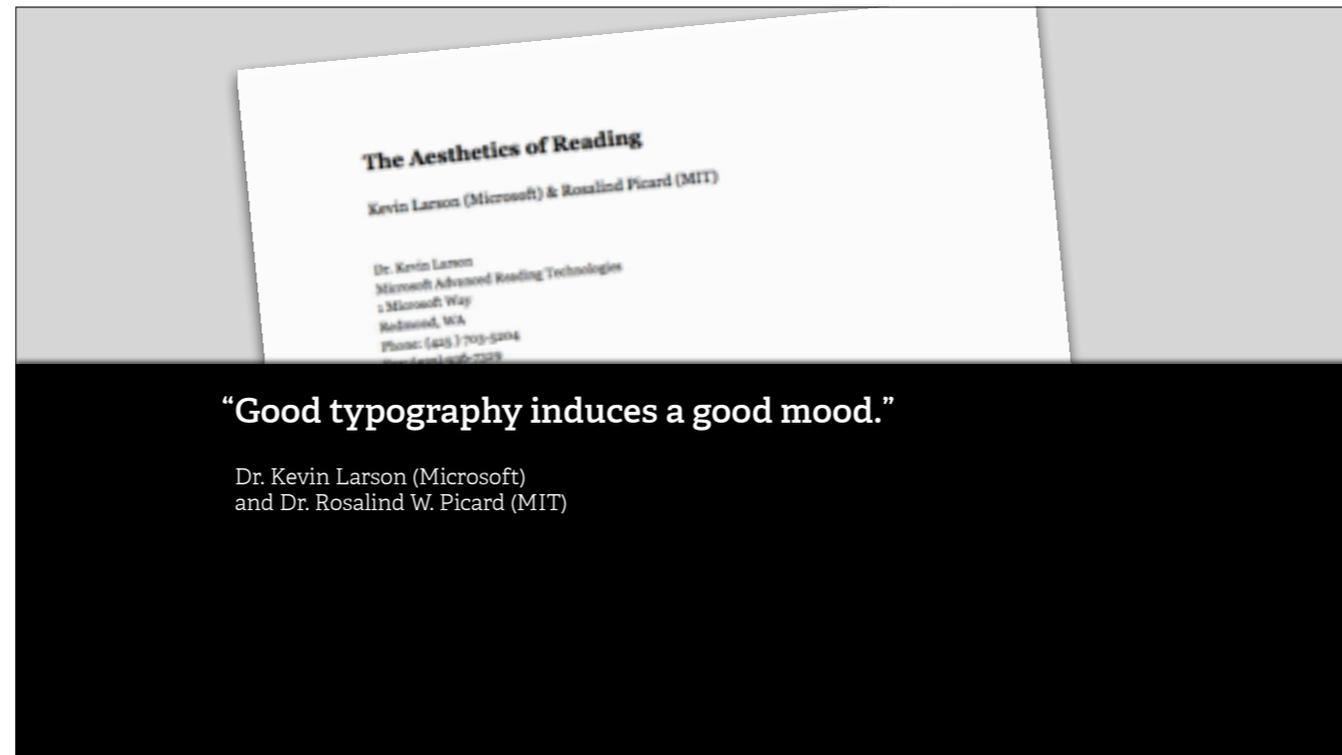
I don't want to talk about that. And I don't want to talk about novels (or bibles). I want to talk about Billboards.

I want to talk about Introductions and Seductions.

We all know there's plenty of porn on the web, but there's not enough seduction. I don't mean dating sites. I mean typographic seduction.



A few years ago, a scientific study was conducted at MIT which concluded that good quality typography is responsible for greater engagement during reading.



From which they concluded that:

Good typography induces a good mood!

These are eminent scientists doing proper scientific research.

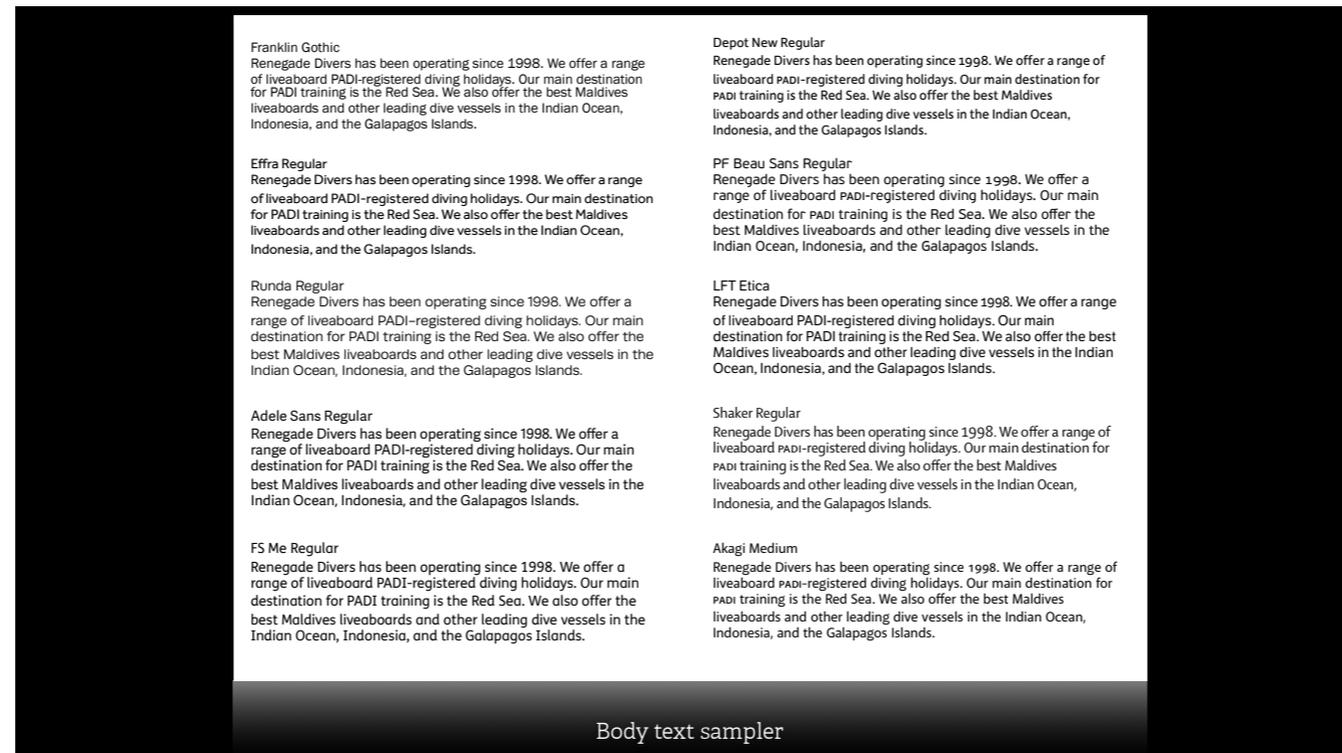
**Good typography**

*puts you in a*

**good mood!**

Like beer and sex!

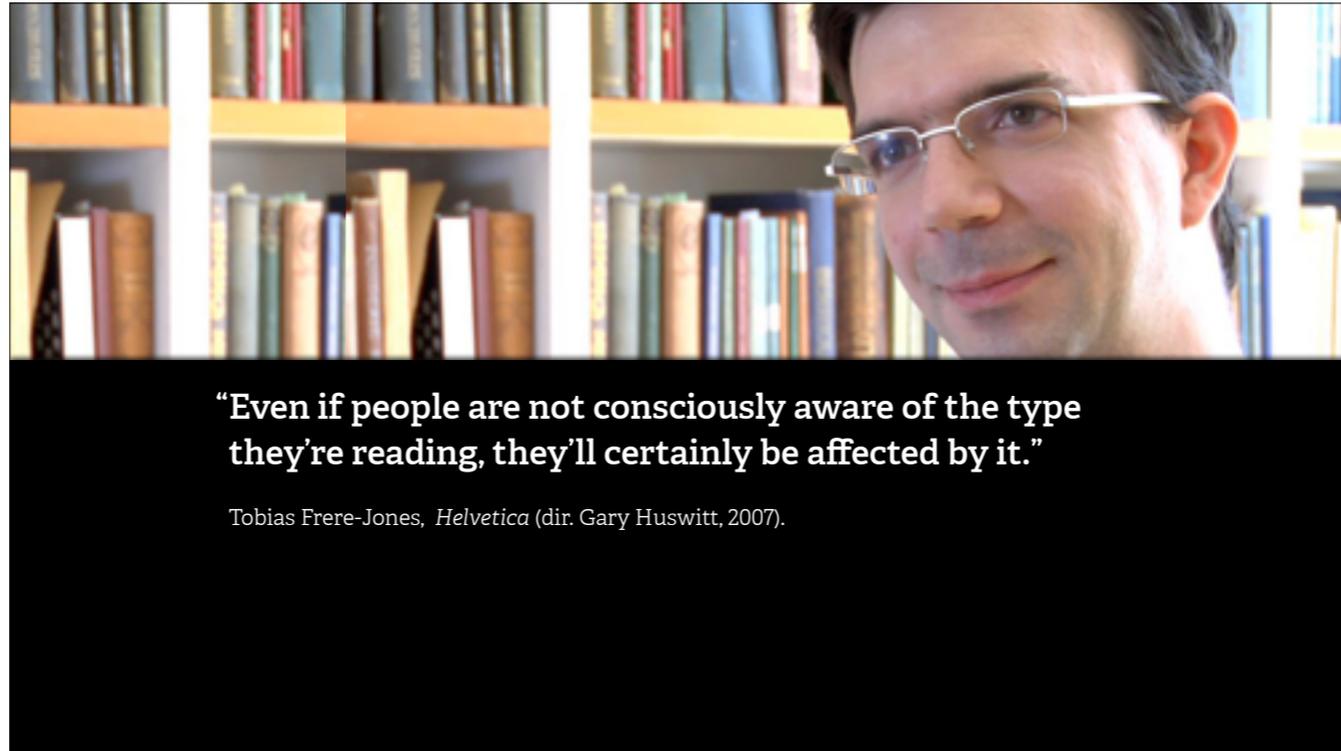
Science has shown that good typography can improve the reader's experience without them even knowing it.



Now before I continue let's think about good typography and what you might do when you're choosing a typeface for the body copy on a website.

After your **initial choice** between a sans and a serif, looking for **similar traits** in a typeface: sturdy and simple shapes, low contrast between the thick and thin strokes, and a generous x-height.

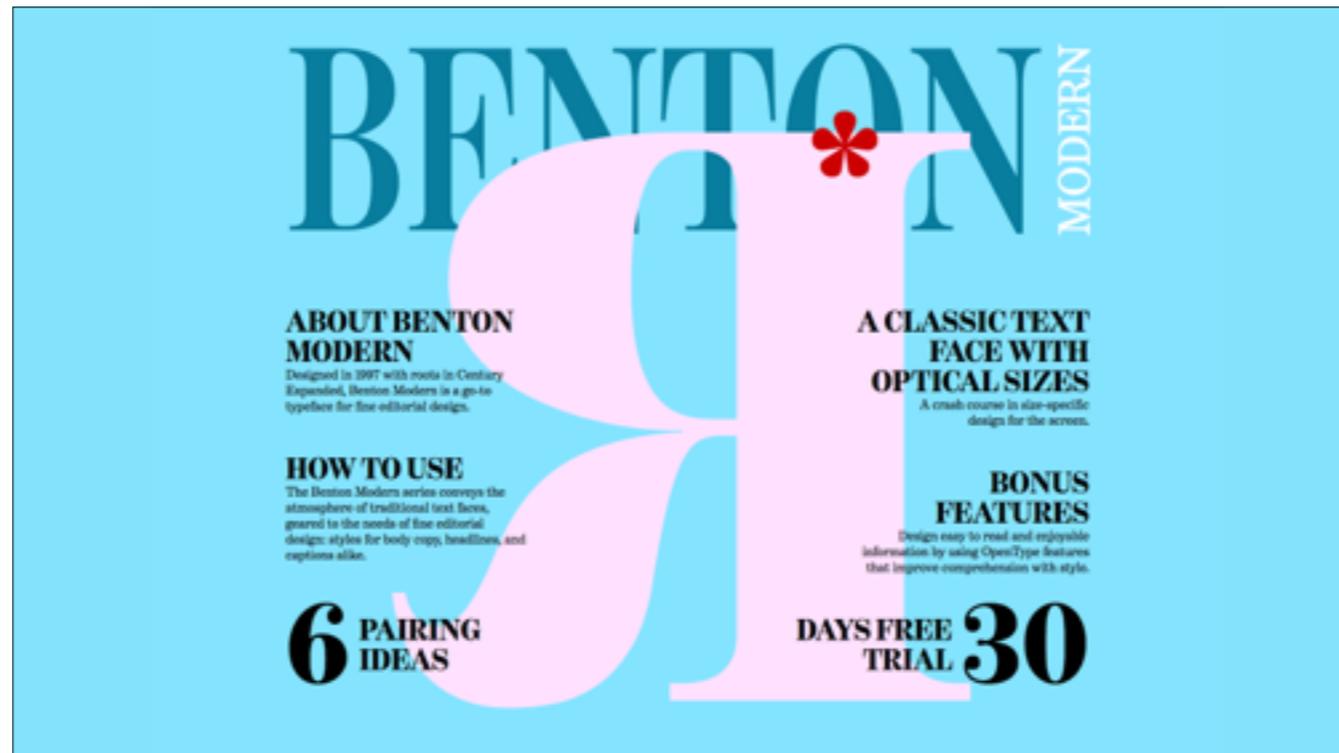
beyond these **practical decisions** your choice of body text *\*will\** register with your reader, but only in a subtle ways.



**“Even if people are not consciously aware of the type  
they’re reading, they’ll certainly be affected by it.”**

Tobias Frere-Jones, *Helvetica* (dir. Gary Huswitt, 2007).

As type designer Tobias Frere-Jones said



You can however, have a **big** effect on your reader. Headings and display text are your **attention grabbers**.

They set the scene and draw people in. Visitors to the webpage will **'see' this type before they 'read'** it, and that's your chance to choose a typeface that immediately expresses what the text, and indeed the entire website, stands for.

Take advantage of that. Get expressive with your typography. Make it big!

**You can influence  
the way people feel.**

Through font choice and typesetting you can create an ambience and an emotional state in your reader.

You can manipulate the way people feel just through type.

That's a proper superpower.

I want to get you to think about how to take advantage of this by introducing impactful, expressive typography to your designs on the web.

**I hate obtuse  
theoretical  
mathematics**

The cool thing is that you can have that impact on your reader before they've even read the words! Type, especially when it's big, forms an instant picture and is seen before it is read, setting up expectations of the content.

**I love little  
fluffy kittens**

Perhaps you were expecting this text to say something like this!

So typography does not just convey information. It imparts feeling, emotion and sentiment, and arouses pre-conceived ideas of trust, tone and content.

**This is a story about  
someone who lived in  
Happyland. His name was  
Mr Happy and he was  
fat and round, and happy.  
One day Mr Happy went  
for a walk in the woods.**

As a designer, the way you set your type – the size, spacing, colour and context – will go a long way to forming a negative or positive experience.

The quality of your typesetting can have a big impact on how your reader feels, but the most significant contributor will be your choice of typeface.



This is Sarah Hyndman. She is an expert in multisensory typography.

Sarah describes how fonts can communicate with our subconscious, leaving our conscious brain to read what the words are actually saying.

Like all visual stimuli, fonts tap into our amygdala, the part of the brain hardwired for protection and for survival. It's the bit that tells us instinctively that something red and round is likely to be ripe and sweet and good to eat. It also tells us that something jagged is likely to be angry or dangerous, and likely to taste sour or bitter.

To show this, Sarah has experimented on conference audiences – not you.



So fonts interact with the senses.

If if they can interact with our senses, they can also make us feel emotions.

So think how you might want your readers to **feel** because **you** can make them feel that way.



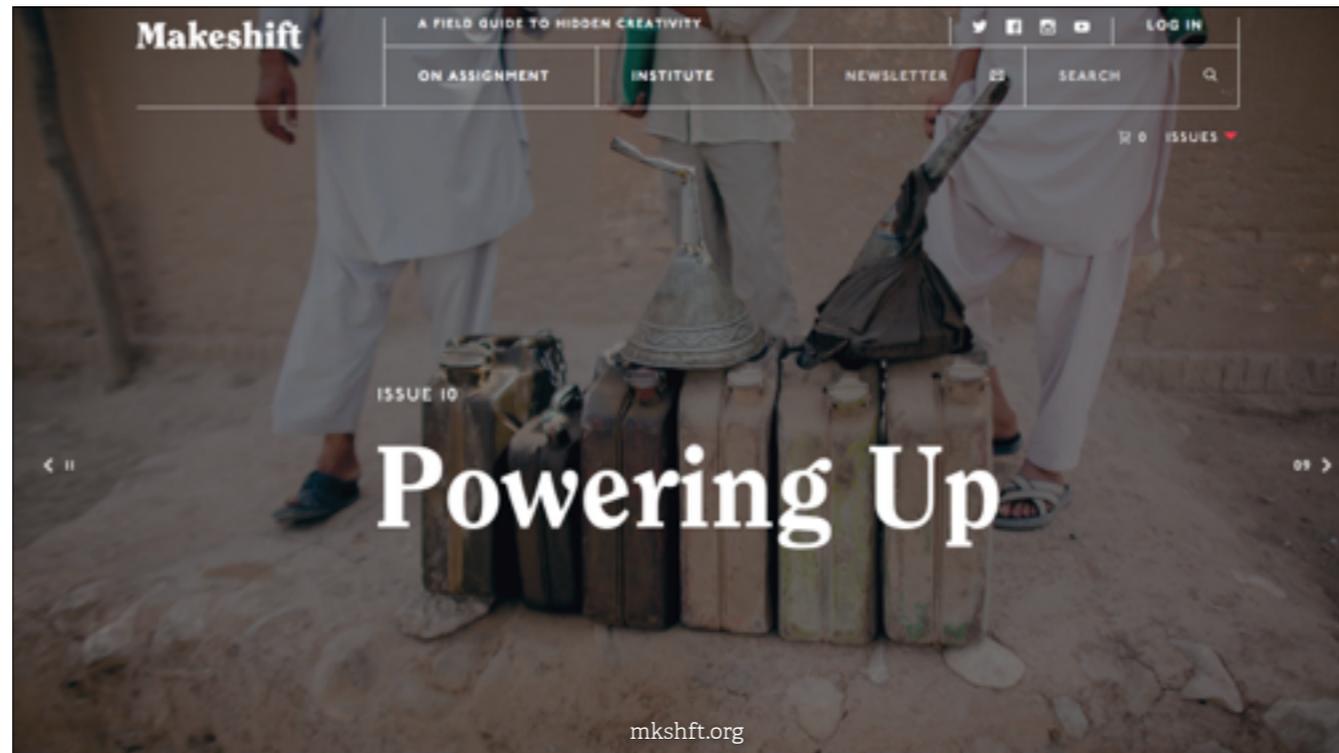
2-12  
WEEKS

**Movement** feels easier because lung capacity and blood circulation has **improved**.

When you quit smoking, blood circulation in the vertebrae and back muscles increases, thus reducing the risk of back problems. The skin looks healthier, as blood flows more efficiently.

helsenorge.no

Maybe you want them to feel inspired like this stop smoking campaign



Intrigued, like Makeshift magazine



Reassured





Feels like a dangerous walk in a park. Not sure I want to go anywhere near those butterflies!



Fonts also tap into the complex library of associations that you've been building up in your brains all of your lives. You build up these associations every time you see a font, from the context that you see it in.

This means that all of us associate certain letterforms with topics, times and places.

Retiro is obviously Spanish.



Very Italian

Bodoni  
Eurostile



# Voyage au Centre de la Terre

Le 24 mai 1863, un dimanche, mon oncle,  
le professeur Lidenbrock, revint  
précipitamment vers sa petite maison  
située au numéro 19 de König-strasse,  
l'une des plus anciennes rues du vieux  
quartier de Hambo

Je restai seul. Mais de faire  
entendre mieux ce plus tranquille

arrêter l'escalier de bois, et le maître  
de la maison, traversant la salle à

French. Not just the language.



And Knockout and Gotham couldn't be more urban American



Slab serif (Sentinel in this case) say America to me.



Although Clarendon gives a sense of the late 20th century – 60s, 70s.





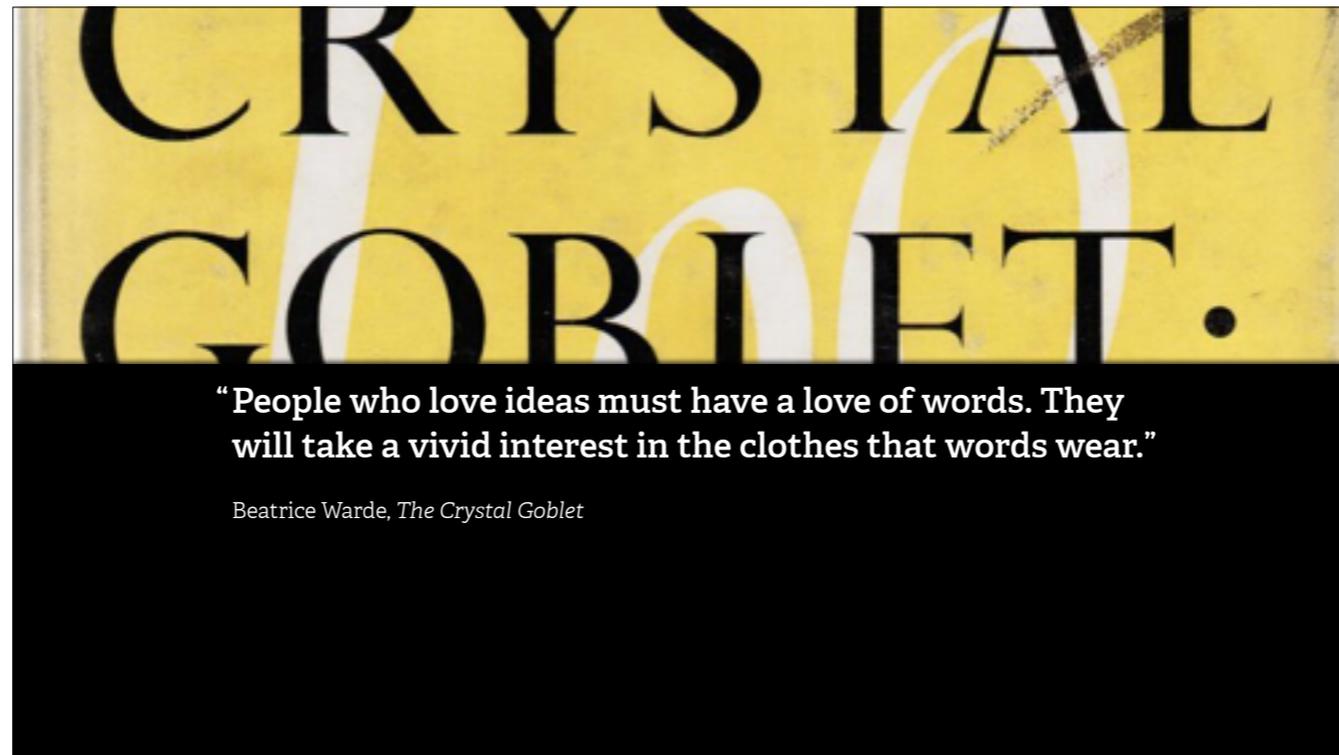
Sort of Victorian industrial in a hipster kind of way.



Or from the future a retro kind of way.



This is Beatrice Warde, an American communicator on typography.



In 1955 she introduced the idea that typefaces are the clothes that words wear.

Just as we judge someone based on the clothes they are wearing, so we make judgements about text based on the typeface in which it is set. Choosing the same typeface as everyone else, especially if you're trying to make an impact, is like turning up to a party in the same dress; or to a meeting in the same suit, shirt and tie;



or for that matter the same facial hair, tight trousers and hobnail boots. Any **hipsters** in the audience?

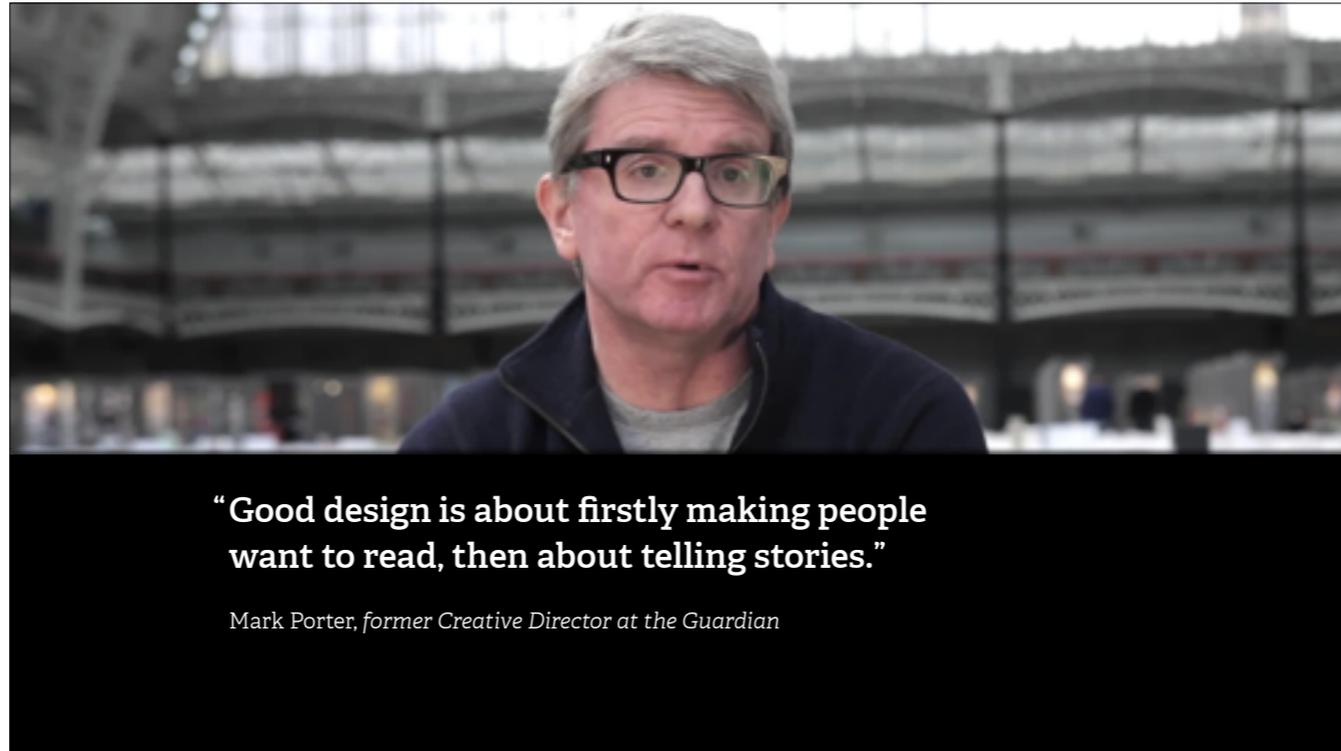
So what do you want your type to be? Youthfully enthusiastic? Businesslike? Cutting edge? Sensible and secure? Fun and informal? Authoritarian? From the future? Hipster?

Make a statement! Let the world know what the website stands for!



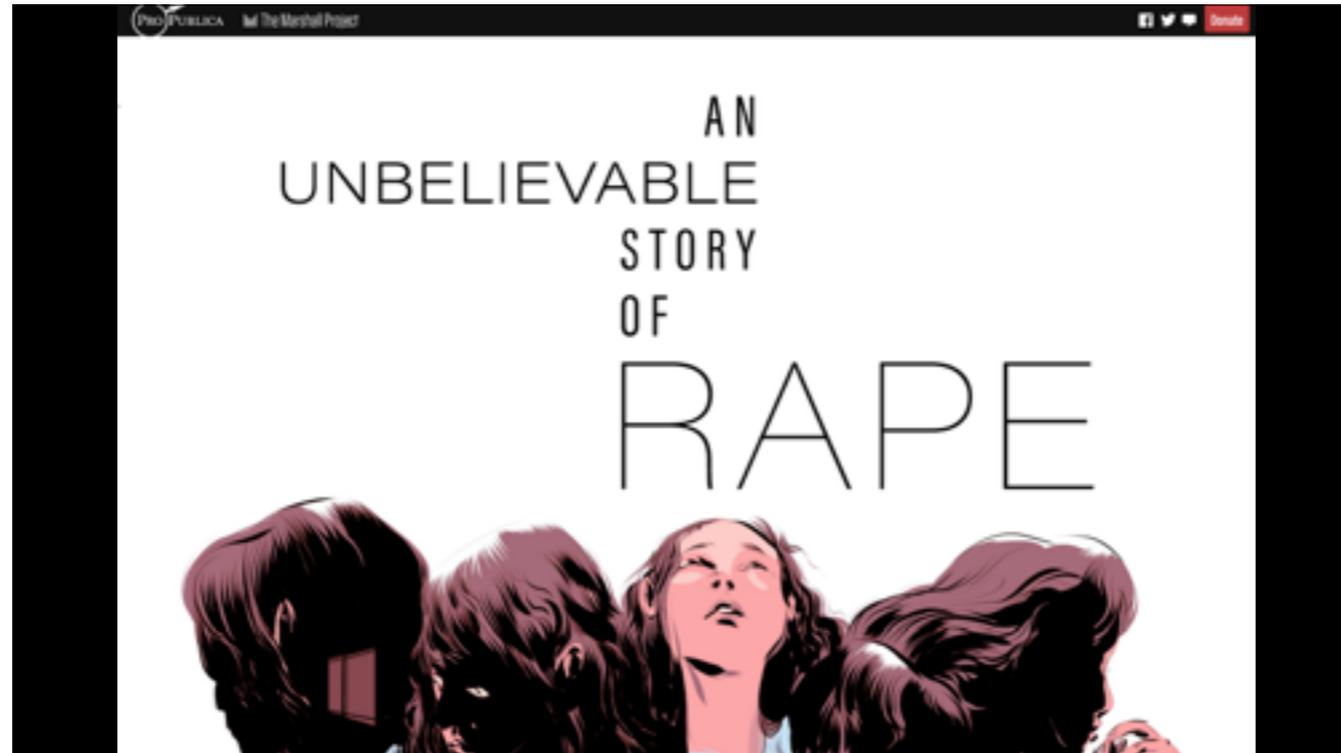
What you're trying to do is connect people with the **spirit** and **personality** of the website and establish a **relationship** with the **story** they are reading.

Whether that's a **news** story or a the story of your **product** or **charity**.



Mark Porter...

And combined with art direction, this is what typography does for you.



Here the sparseness of the typeface and the setting of the headline is powerful and disconcerting, like the subject matter.

Headlines help to set the scene. Readers will **reward** your time spent designing the typography **with their attention**.



Let's talk about fonts.

The type designer Christian Schwartz says there are two kinds of display typefaces.

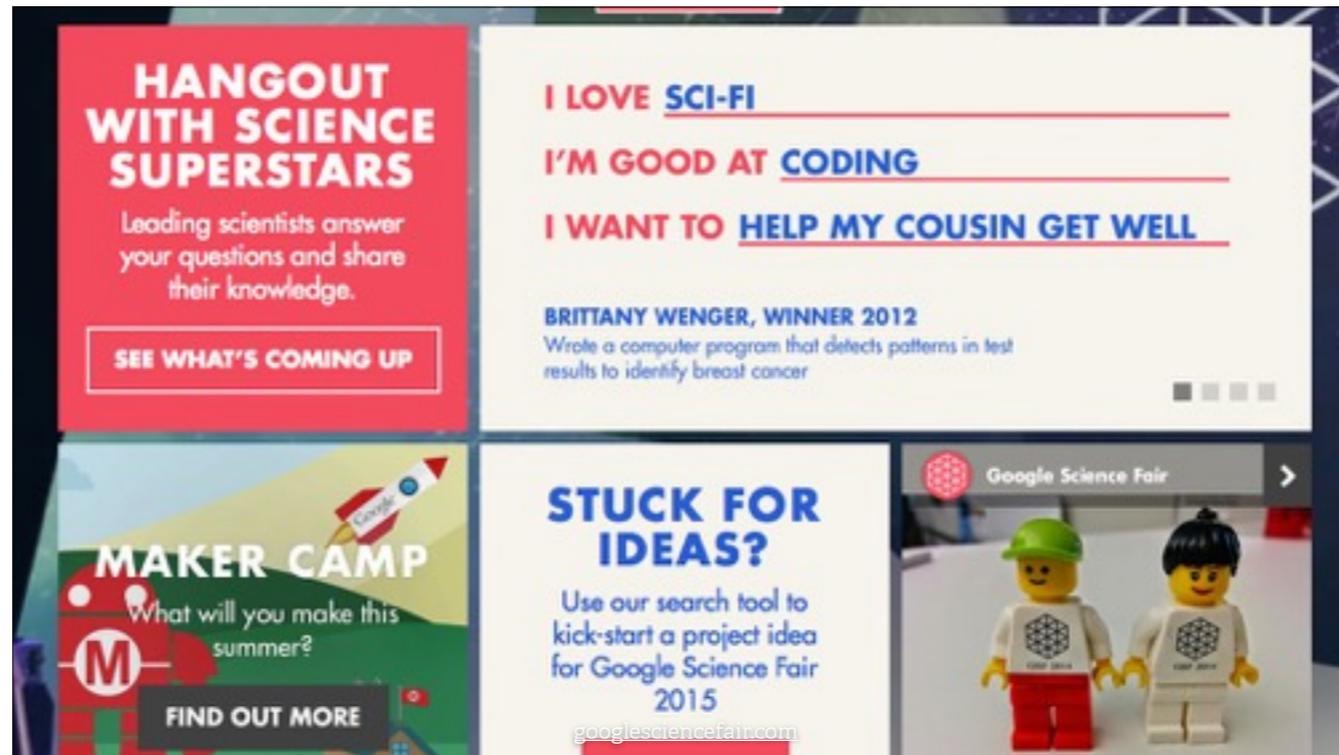
The first kind are the workhorse typefaces that will do whatever you want them to do. Helvetica and Futura are good examples.

Proxima Nova  
**Proxima Nova**  
**Proxima Nova**

And so is Proxima Nova.

large x-height, low stroke contrast, open apertures, and large counters  
geometric gothic sans-serif

These workhorse fonts can be shaped in many different ways, but this also means they are found everywhere and take great skill and practise to work with in a unique and striking manner...



Like this use of Futura.

NEWS	2-16
WORLD	17-4
BUSINESS	25-27
VIEWSPAPER	28-35
CRYPTIC & CONSCIE	
CROSSWORDS	36-37
GAMES	36-37
SPORT	38

**THE DAILY NEWS ABROAD:**  
Austria €3 Bahrain \$04.50 Belgium €3.25  
Croatia HRK30 Cyprus €4.20 Denmark  
DKr29 Estonia €3.04 Finland €5.75  
France €3.25 Germany €3 Gibraltar £2  
Greece €3.50 Hungary HUF450 Italy €3  
Luxembourg €3 Malta €2.95 Morocco  
Mdh24 Netherlands €3.25 Norway Nkr30  
Portagal (Cont) €3 Slovakia €3.98/SK00  
Slovenia SIT840 Spain €3 Switzerland  
Sfr6 Turkey YTL7.50 US \$3

Tablet Gothic Wide  
Tablet Gothic Normal  
Tablet Gothic Narrow  
Tablet Gothic Semi-Condensed  
Tablet Gothic Condensed  
Tablet Gothic Compressed

84

Louis Sullivan

a compact

are, that distinguishes them from ourselves a  
from each other. -- *Unfailingly in nature these  
shapes express the inner life, the native quali  
the animal, tree, bird, fish, that they present to  
they are so **characteristic**, so recognizable,  
say, simply, it is 'natural' it should be so. (...) Un  
ingly the essence of things is taking shape in  
matter of things, and this unspeakable proce  
call birth and growth.(...)*

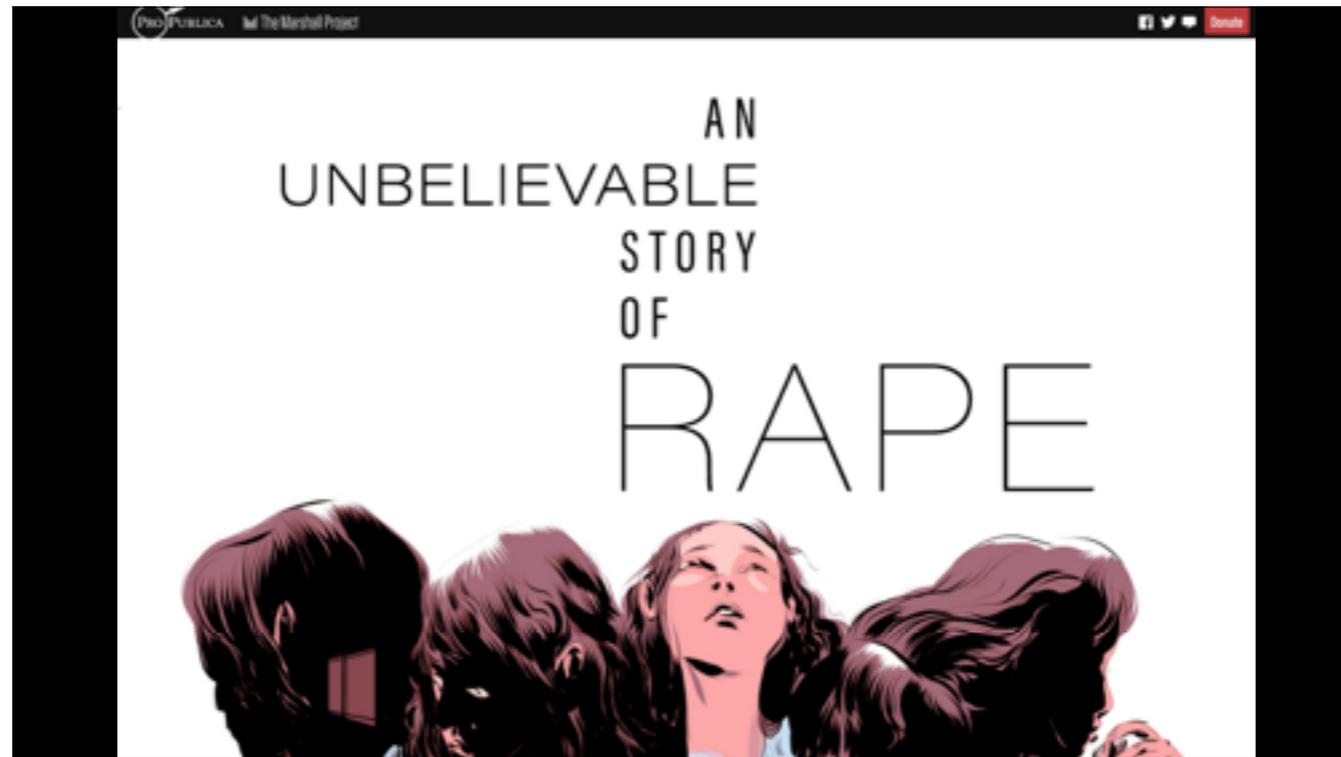
Other fonts, like Tablet Gothic, come as part of larger font families, so-called 'super-families'. If you have chosen a body text font which is part of a super-family, you could look straight away to the display styles within that family, knowing that the two fonts will sit together well.

Wide Thin <i>Oblique</i>	Thin <i>Oblique</i>	Narrow Thin <i>Oblique</i>
Wide Light <i>Oblique</i>	Light <i>Oblique</i>	Narrow Light <i>Oblique</i>
Wide Regular <i>Oblique</i>	Regular <i>Oblique</i>	Narrow Regular <i>Oblique</i>
<b>Wide SB <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>SB <i>Oblique</i> Bold</b>	<b>Narrow SB <i>Oblique</i></b>
<b>Wide Bold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b><i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Narrow Bold <i>Oblique</i></b>
<b>Wide Xbold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Xbold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Narrow Xbold <i>Oblique</i></b>
<b>Wide Heavy <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Heavy <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Narrow Heavy <i>Oblique</i></b>
SemiCond Thin <i>Oblique</i>	Cond Thin <i>Oblique</i>	Compressed Thin <i>Oblique</i>
SemiCond Light <i>Oblique</i>	Cond Light <i>Oblique</i>	Compressed Light <i>Oblique</i>
SemiCond Regular <i>Oblique</i>	Cond Regular <i>Oblique</i>	Compressed Regular <i>Oblique</i>
SemiCond SB <i>Oblique</i>	Cond SB <i>Oblique</i>	Compressed SB <i>Oblique</i>
<b>SemiCond Bold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Cond Bold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Compressed Bold <i>Oblique</i></b>
<b>SemiCond Xbold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Cond Xbold <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Compressed Extrabold <i>Oblique</i></b>
<b>SemiCond Heavy <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Cond Heavy <i>Oblique</i></b>	<b>Compressed Heavy <i>Oblique</i></b>

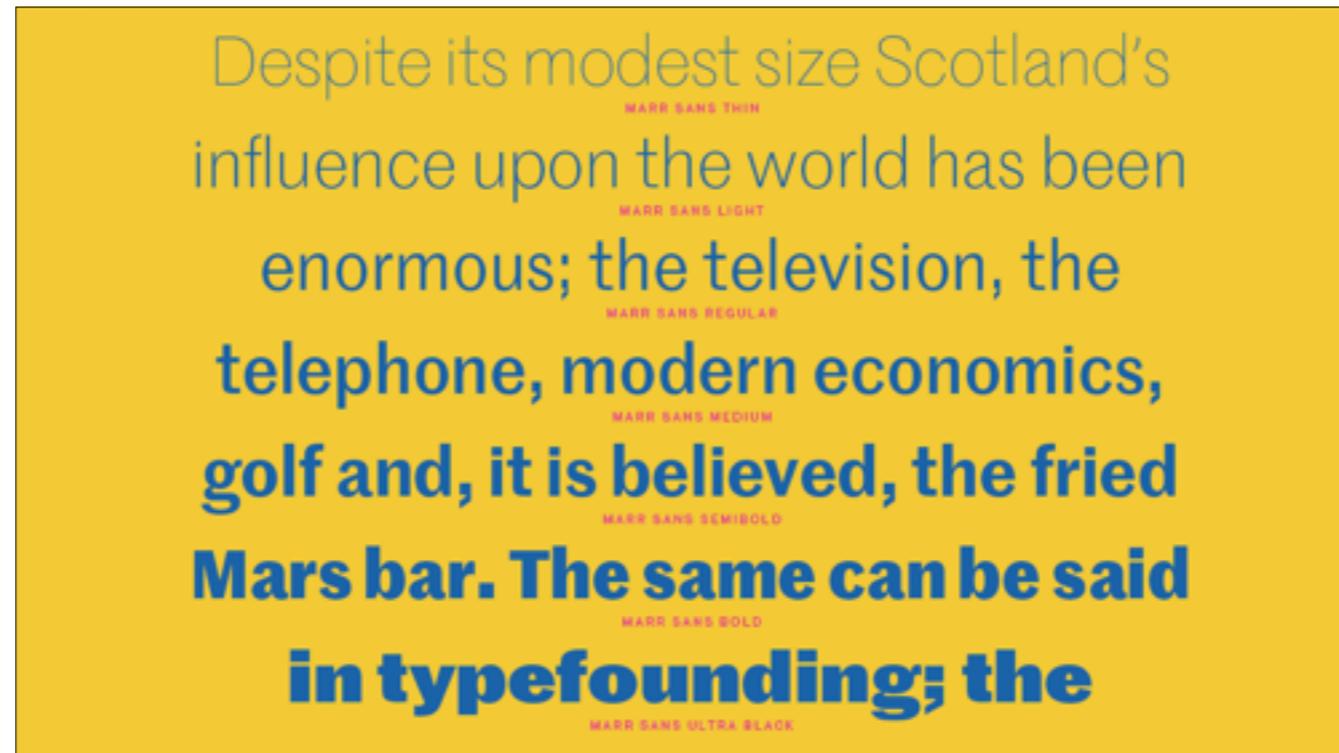
Display fonts in super-families are often simply the extreme weights and widths. This is particularly true if you're using the kind of workhorse typeface described earlier.



As is Acumin.  
It was used in the Propublica example.



Using different widths of Acumin.



**Marr Sans.** A slightly eccentric sans–serif.

The second kind of typeface is one that does most of the work for you. Like finely tailored clothing, it's the detail in the design that adds interest.

**gorgeous georgina**

*gorgeous georgina*

*gorgeous georgina*

*gorgeous georgina*

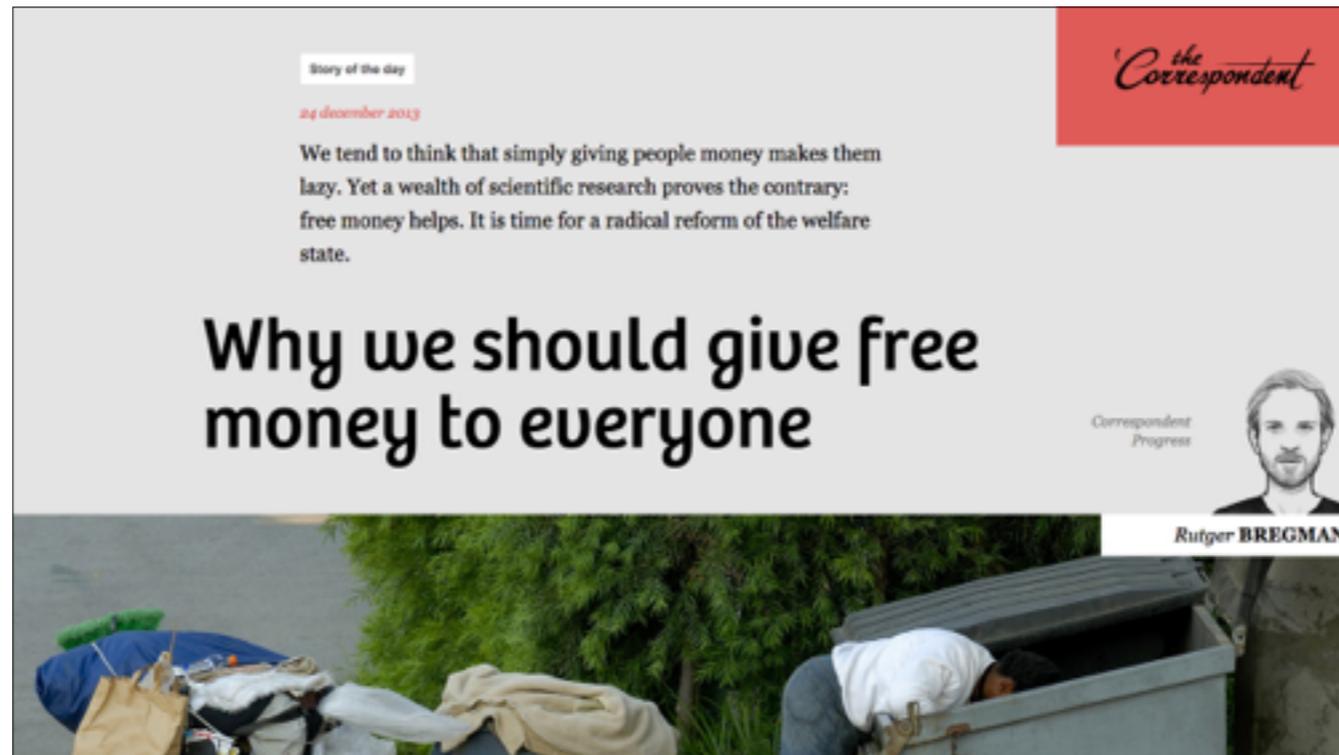
That lends character straight away.

## **FS Clerkenwell**

---

**FS Clerkenwell is a traditional type but with a contemporary twist.** Inspired by the Victorian architecture in Clerkenwell, London where intricate brick buildings have been converted into modern bars, restaurants and offices. Old fashioned values meet new school trends.

FS Clerkenwell. Similarly slightly quirky.



Bree.

These typefaces carry much more inherent character, but are also less malleable. It's harder to adapt them to different contexts. Both kinds of typefaces have their place, but it's good to be aware of what you're using.

Story of the day  
24 december 2013

We tend to think that simply giving people money makes them lazy. Yet a wealth of scientific research proves the contrary: free money helps. It is time for a radical reform of the welfare state.

# Why we should give free money to everyone

Correspondent  
Progress

Rutger BREGMAN

Bree.

These typefaces carry much more inherent character, but are also less malleable. It's harder to adapt them to different contexts. Both kinds of typefaces have their place, but it's good to be aware of what you're using.



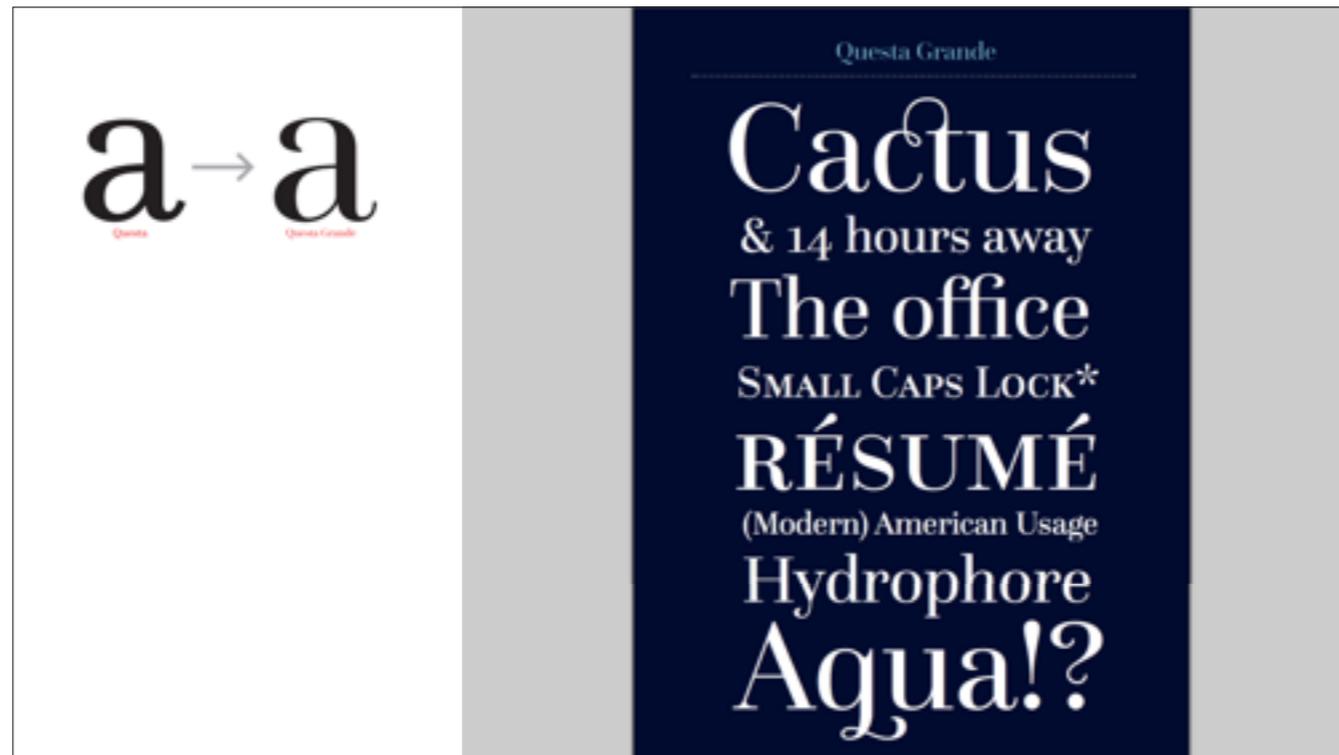
Always look for typefaces designed specifically for display use. Sometimes these will be obvious, like Strangelove, a very narrow handwriting font which can only be used in big sizes.



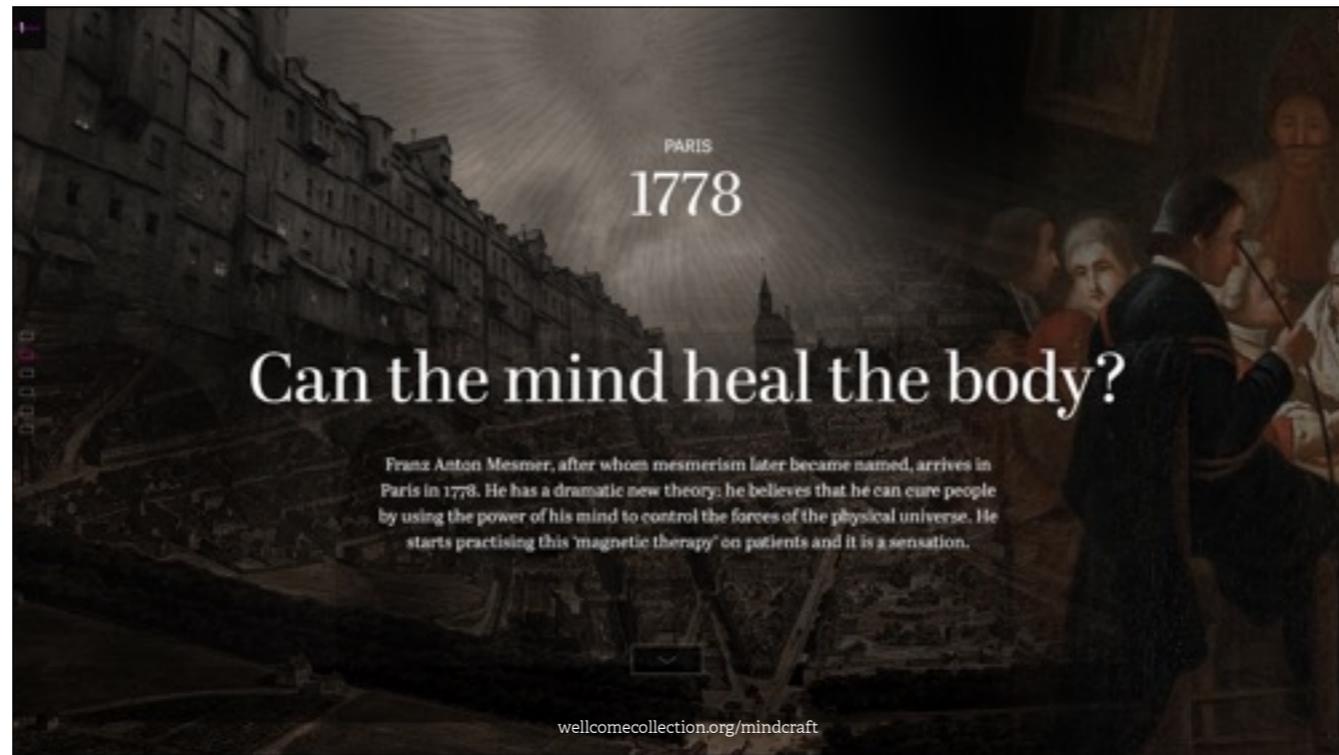
More sophisticated type families will have specific 'display' styles.

These are often variations on the body text, especially adjusted for setting at large sizes.

For example, closely comparing Benton Modern RE with Benton Modern Display reveals that in the display style, the contrast (difference between thick and thin strokes) is increased, as is the size difference between lower and uppercase letters.



The most expressive display styles exaggerate design features of body text. Questa Grande beautifully enhances the fine curves, flicks and curls hinted at in the text styles.



Abril Display takes a different approach by applying the proportions of the text face to a seemingly different style – that of a high contrast Didone – to really enhance the presence of the text.

Abril is a modern font based on 19th century type styles, and we've used its historical connotations here.

*Aventurier*



**Explore the Red Sea**

Learn to dive with our amazing scuba experiences and PADI courses. For top quality tuition in warm crystal clear seas, come to us – Renegade Divers.

---

Many typefaces are designed with hidden gems enabling you to be even more creative in your type setting.

These hidden gems are powered by a technology called OpenType invented in 1996, coincidentally the same year as CSS

OpenType bundles optional letterforms such as ligatures, swashes and alternates within the font files.



Swashes in particular can add a sophistication to your text. They add a typographic flourish, by way of a flamboyant addition to a character, such as an exaggerated serif, tail or entry stroke.

Lovely use of Bookmania swashes.

```
<h1 class="swsh">  
  
.swsh {  
  font-variant-alternates: swash(1);  
}
```

How do you do that? With `font-variant-alternates`.  
Easier than in Photoshop!

```
<h1 class="swsh">

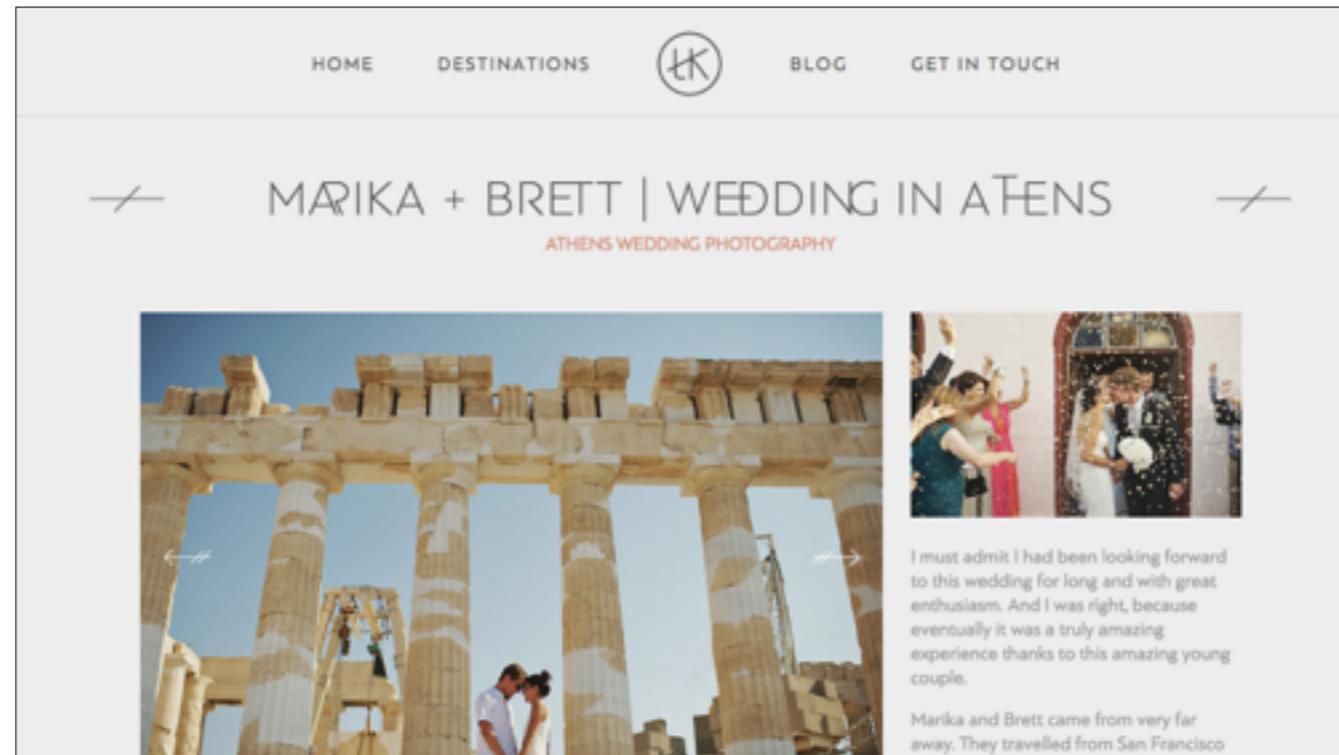
.swsh {
  font-variant-alternates: swash(1);
  @supports not (font-variant-alternates: swash(1)) {
    body {
      font-feature-settings: "swsh" 1;
    }
  }
}
```

Well nearly cos you also have to do this if you want it to work in older browsers too.

*I can see beauty where  
others see ugliness.  
That either makes me  
an artist, or a person  
of very poor taste.*

Other OpenType features to play with include discretionary ligatures, for example an 's' connected to a 't' with a loop to give a high-class or historic feel.

These are in Regal Finesse by Parachute.



More discretionary ligatures, of a different sort.  
Another Parachute font, this time Bague Sans.

```
<h1 class="dlig">

.dlig {
  font-variant-ligatures: discretionary-ligatures;
  font-feature-settings:"dlig" 1;
}
```

How do you do that? With font-variant-ligatures.

Hazlitt Podcasts Fiction Comics Interviews Contributors Bookshop Search f v

# FICTION



## The Lesson

BY JOHANNA SKIBSRUD

The fourth and final installment in our fiction series, wherein we've asked four authors to write a short story inspired by World War I. Commissioned in partnership with the Globe and Mail.

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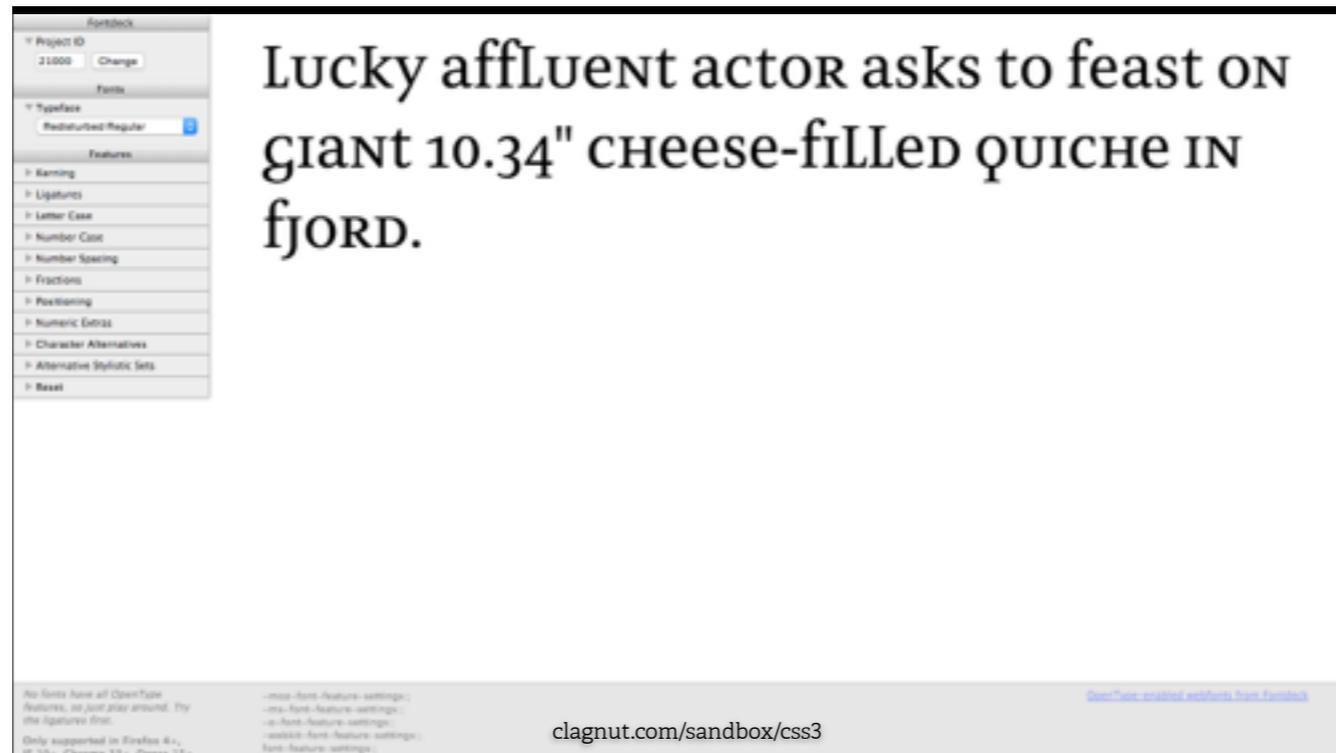
**Most-read Fiction**

<b>1</b>	<b>The Lesson</b> BY JOHANNA SKIBSRUD	<b>2</b>	<b>Chasing Lights</b> BY NABEN RUTHNUM, ANDREW F. SULLIVAN	<b>3</b>	<b>The Bluebirds</b> BY HEATHER O'NEILL
----------	--	----------	--	----------	--

And another example. The 'o' in Fiction is a styleset.

```
<h1 class="ss01">  
  
.dlig {  
  font-variant-alternates: styleset(1);  
  font-feature-settings:"ss01" 1;  
}
```

How do you do that? With font-variant-alternates again.



You can play with more OpenType features at <http://clagnut.com/sandbox/css3>.

Fontdeck

Project ID  
21000

Fonts

Typeface  
-local font-

Features

- > Kerning
- > Ligatures
- > Letter Case
- > Number Case
- > Number Spacing
- > Fractions
- > Positioning
- > Numeric Extras
- > Character Alternatives
- > Alternative Stylistic Sets
- > Reset

# Really lucky affluent actor asks to feast on giant cheese-filled quiche in fjord.

No fonts have all OpenType features, so just play around. Try the ligatures first.  
Only supported in Firefox 4+, IE 10+, Chrome 33+, Opera 15+.

`--moz-font-feature-settings;`  
`--ms-font-feature-settings;`  
`--o-font-feature-settings;`  
`--webkit-font-feature-settings;`  
`font-feature-settings;`

[clagnut.com/sandbox/css3](http://clagnut.com/sandbox/css3)

[OpenType-enabled webforms from Fontdeck](#)



A story. This is a magazine called The Great Discontent. It's published online and in print. The print edition was designed by Frank Chimero.

A few years ago Frank gave a great talk at Kerning conference in Italy about how he was working on the print design, while Ryan Essmaker, cofounder of the magazine, was designing the website version.

But they needed to collaborate because the website was going to be influenced by the print and vice versa.





And what they have now is this. Beautiful, simple, impactful.  
The Maison Neue is handled deftly working as a gentle introduction.

to say that I magically started getting clients, but in reality I had been really good about posting my work online, and the way networking happens in Portland is so much friendlier than anywhere I've ever been. People met me and offered to email friends at publication. I slowly started receiving editorial jobs for local papers like the *Portland Mercury* and *Willamette Week*.

**“When I started incorporating hand-lettering and illustration into my work, everything fell into place and I started doing projects I truly felt proud of. When I stopped trying to work in someone else’s style, it finally felt natural.”**



And there's some lovely touches of interruptions in the articles. Leitura is used as a generous impact.



# The Pelican Story

In 1936, Allen Lane, the founder of Penguin, overheard a woman at a bookstall in King's Cross station asking for 'one of those Pelican books'. Presumably she meant a Penguin, but Lane, concerned that his competitors might snatch up bird names, decided to launch a new flock of non-fiction books. The Pelican imprint was born.

Another story. At Ampersand the conference I run, I invited Matthew Young to talk about his gorgeous design of the Pelican books.

He designed the online reading experience and the printed paperbacks at the same time.

Here he is talking at Ampersand...



CHAPTER 1

# What We Have to Explain



Matthew talked about making the text HUGE.

I've been talking about making an impact. About making your type bigger, using the screen estate, and Frank was talking about designing with a massive screen in mind.

But can you really have that kind of impact on a tiny thing that fits in your pocket?

Well yes you can. Arguably more so.

## Getting Ready

Taking picture - smile!



This is a capture from some usability testing I was doing recently.  
This is how we hold our phones. Right up close.



Consider this. Text set at 48px, which equates to about 12mm tall.

# Size Calculator

Enter any two values to calculate the third.

**Viewing Distance** 20 centimeters

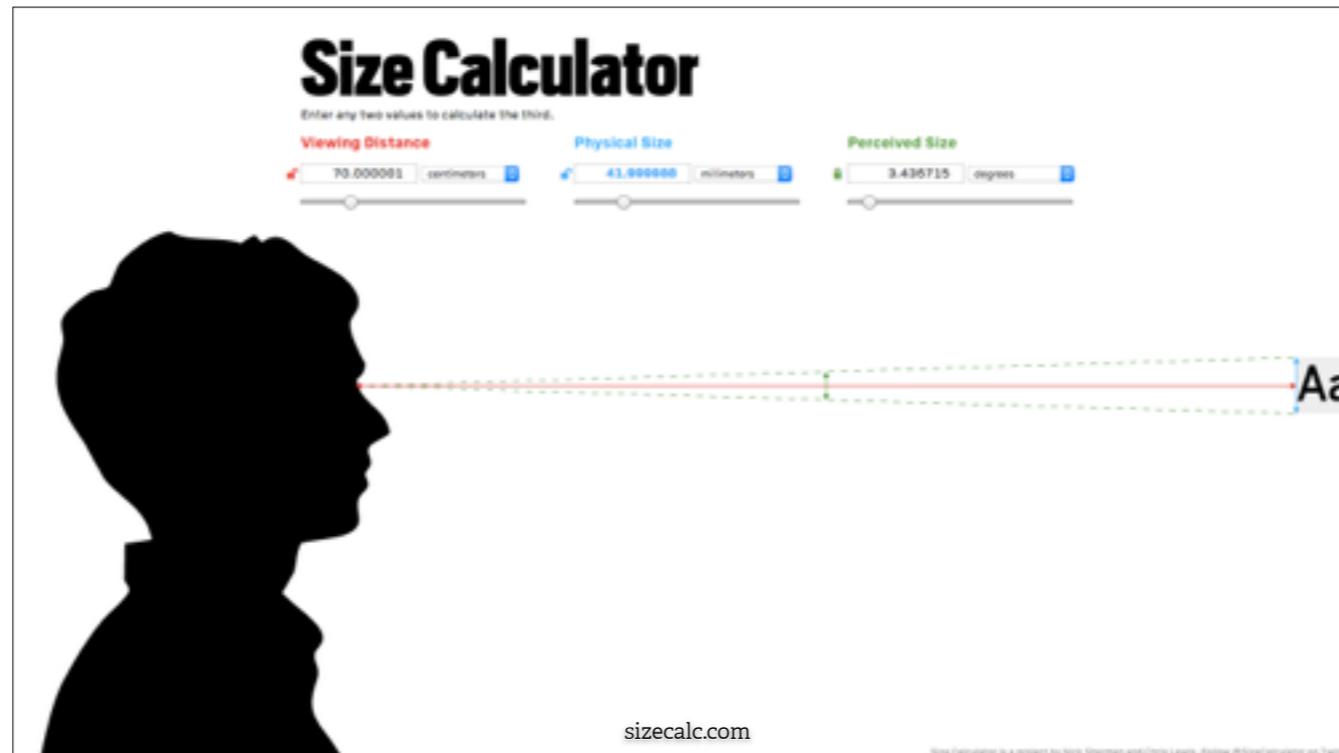
**Physical Size** 12 millimeters

**Perceived Size** 3.436716 degrees

sizecalc.com

Size Calculator is a project by Nick Spadaro and Chris Land. Project © SizeCalculator.com Terms

Small screen, 20cm away.  
48 pixels.  
Text 12mm tall.

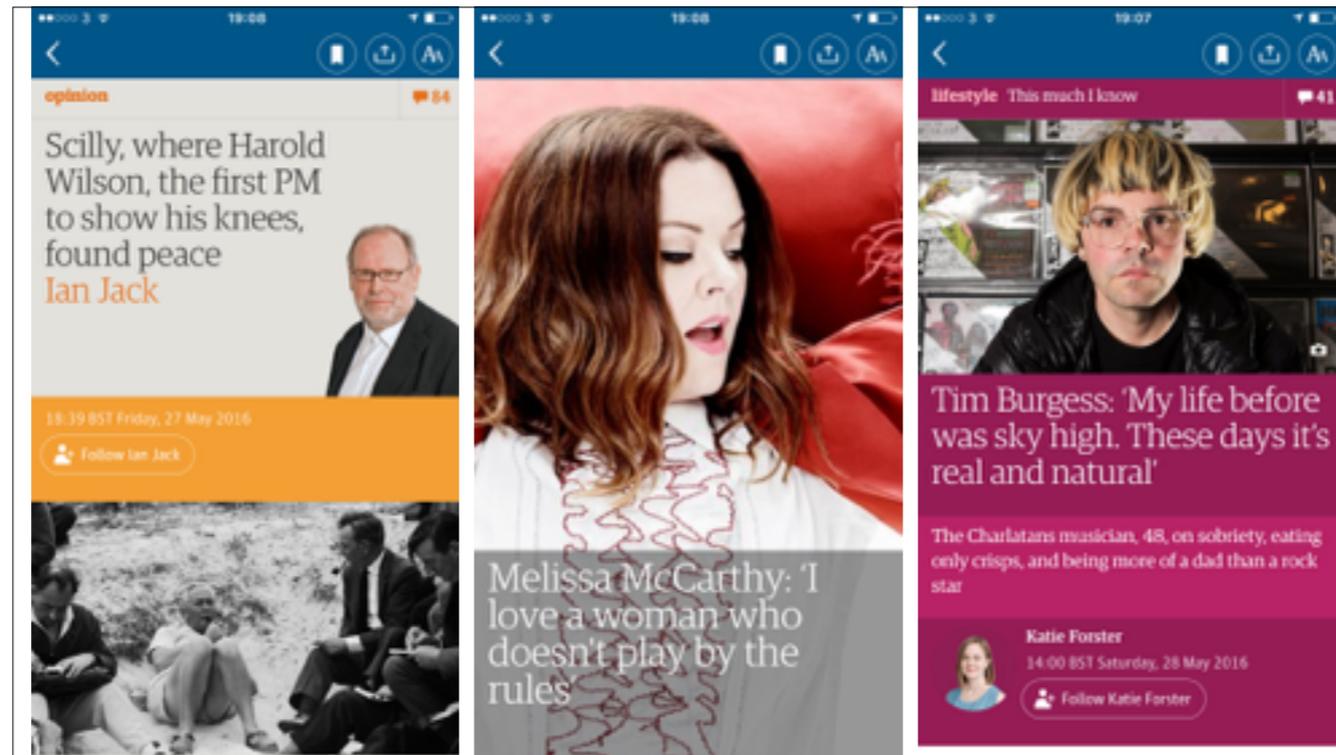


Same perceived size. Now 70cm away, like you might a cinema display.  
Equivalent to text 42mm tall, which is 160px!  
So you certainly can make an impact at those sizes.  
(The Great Discontent sets its headings at half that size).

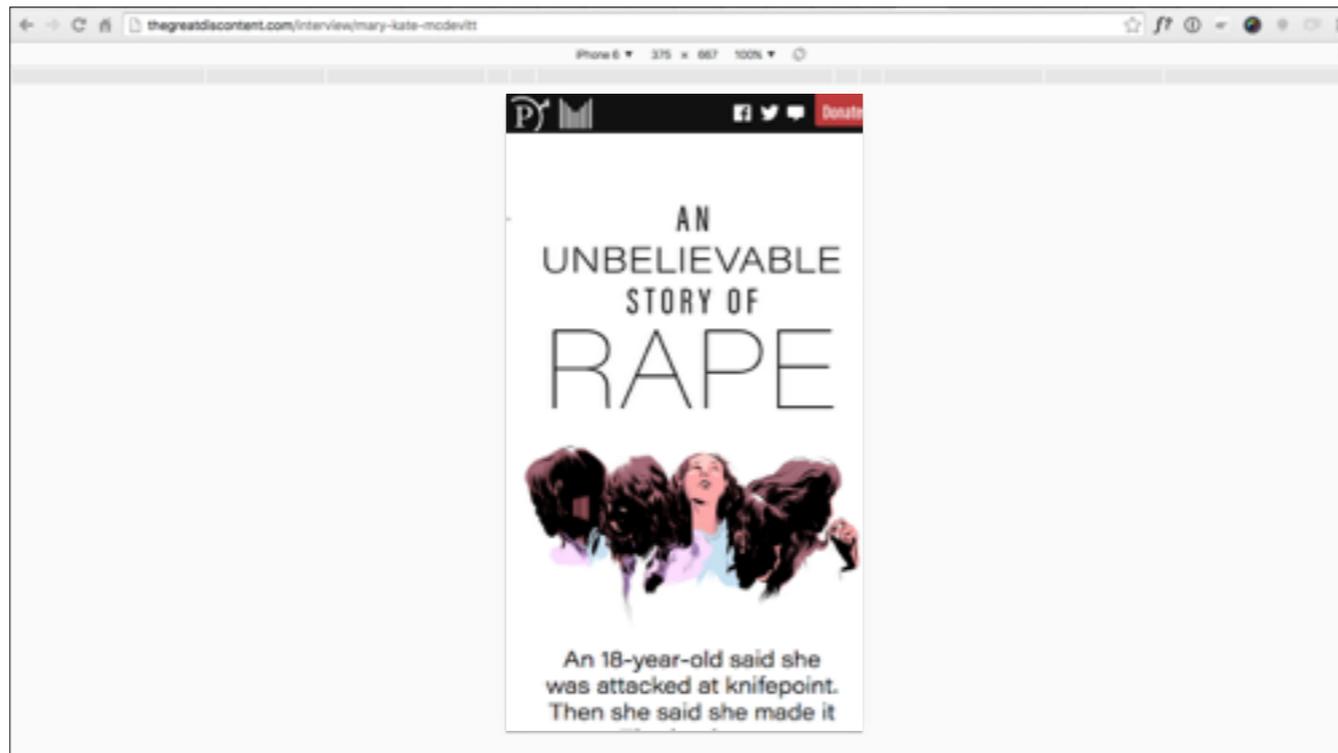


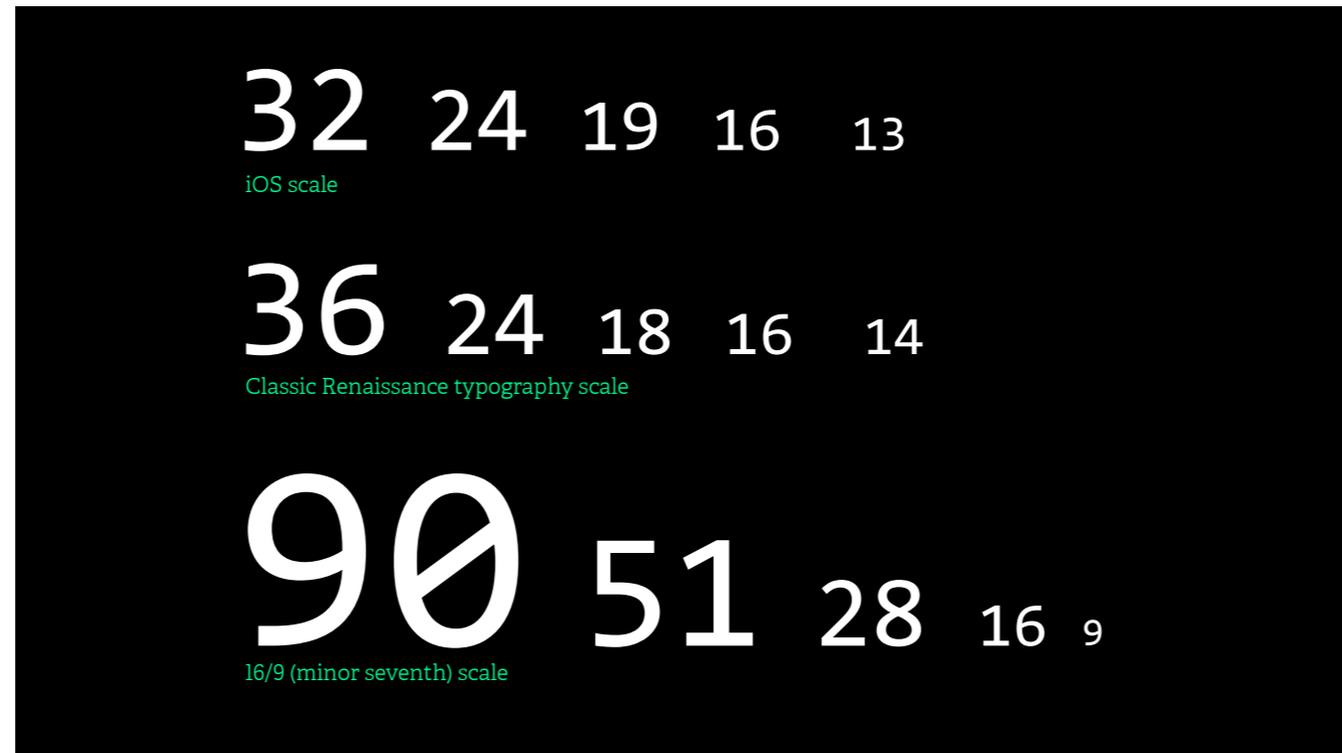
[channel4.com/programmes/father-ted/](http://channel4.com/programmes/father-ted/)

If that was all a bit technical for you, I'll let Father Ted Crilly summarise.



And here's a few examples of the Guardian using what amounts to display text on tiny screens.

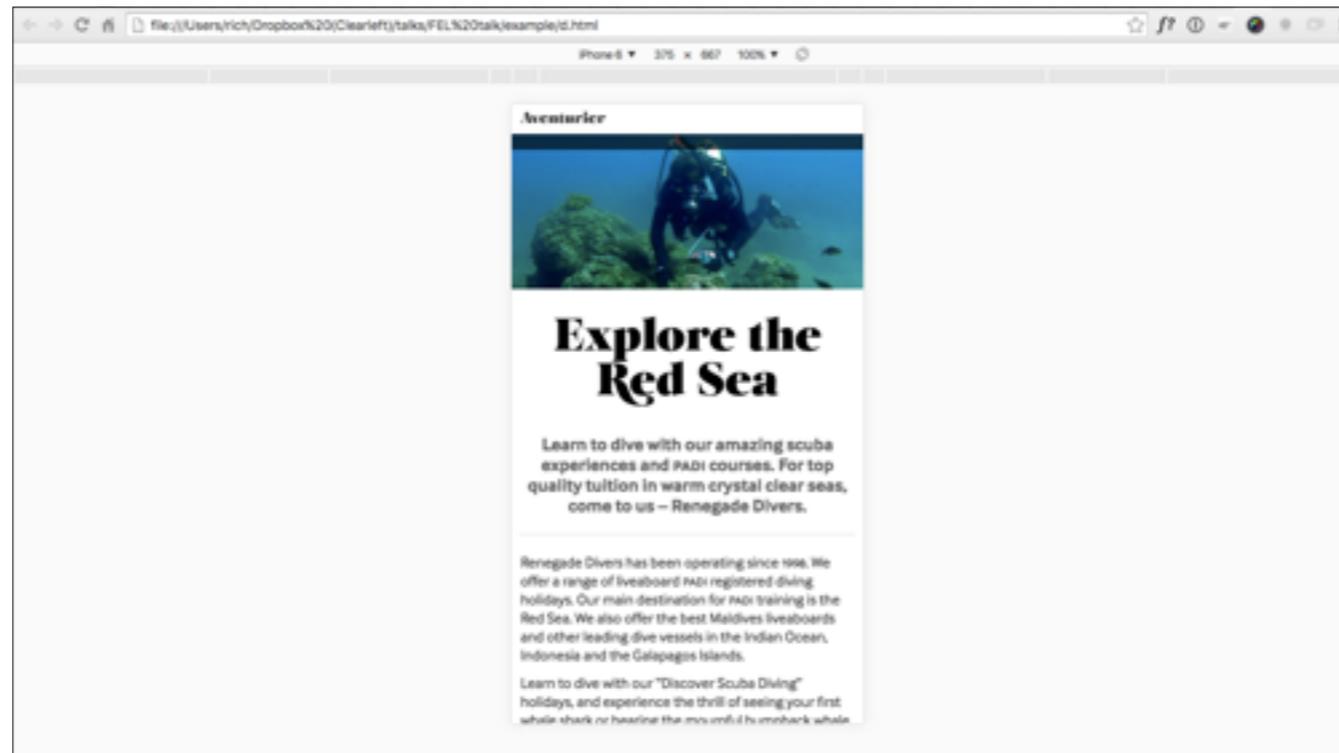




And the way you achieve this is through scales. Here's just a few. Pick what works for you and stick to it. Note some scales have bigger steps than others.

For **small** devices, use **small** steps. Too often the **text is too big** – remember screens are less than 700px tall – you usually don't want that filled up with just a headline.

For bigger screens, bigger steps can work better, taking advantage of more real estate.



An example using the classic scale. Works well – good proportion. Headings stand out.

Aventurier



## Explore the Red Sea

Learn to dive with our amazing scuba experiences and PADI courses. For top quality tuition in warm crystal clear seas, come to us – Renegade Divers.

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Renegade Divers has been operating since 1998. We offer a range of liveboard PADI registered diving holidays. Our main destination for PADI training is the Red Sea. We also offer the best Maldives liveboards and other leading dive vessels in the Indian Ocean, Indonesia and the Galapagos Islands.

Learn to dive with our "Discover Scuba Diving" holidays, and experience the thrill of seeing your first whale shark or hearing the mournful humpback whale. Feel the adrenaline rush as you glide through a throng of a thousand blackfin barracuda, or enjoy the tranquility of floating through secluded underwater coral gardens.

Same scale on larger screen loses the impact.

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Learn to dive with our "Wreck & Reef" holiday, and experience the thrill of seeing

Changing the scale to use – in this case 16/9 to match widescreen aspect ratio.

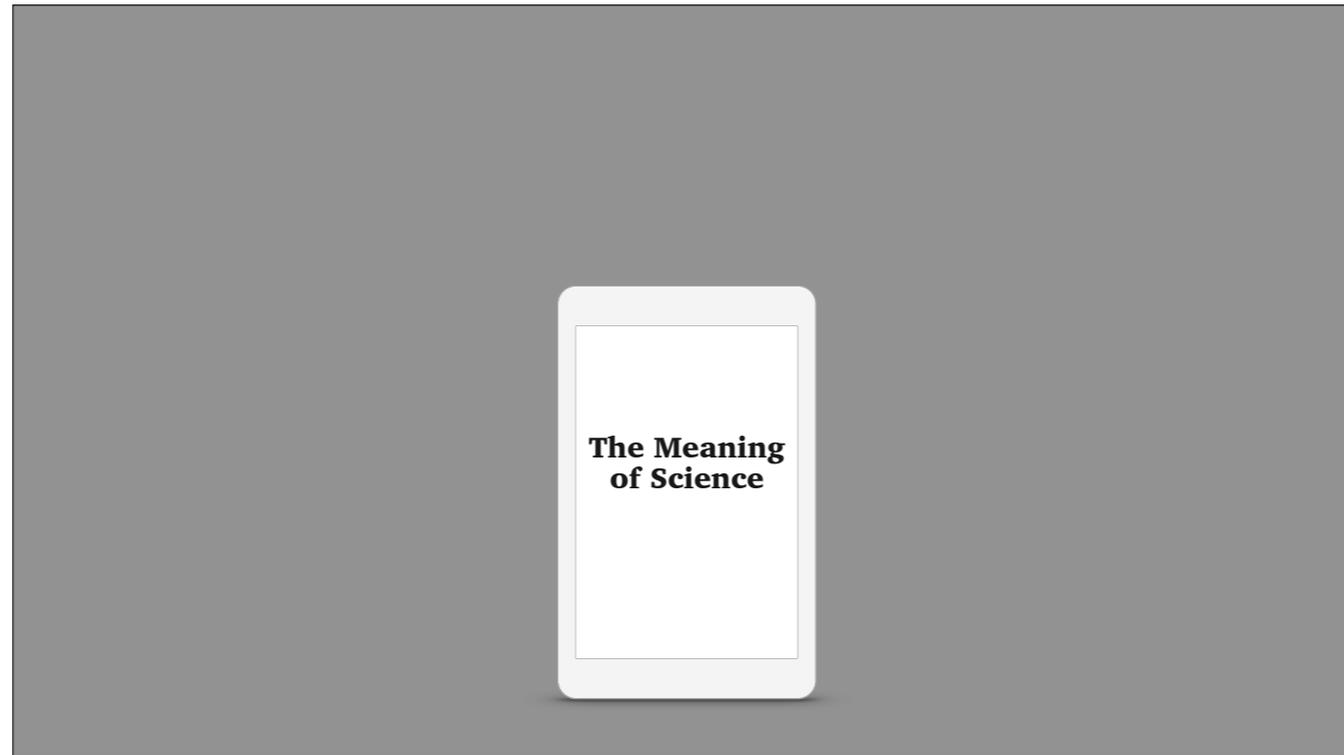
# Scale text with the viewport

When you have text that big it starts to lose its relationship with the text around it and form become more attached to the window or screensize. Technically called the viewport.

CSS introduced some new units you may well of heard of which are a measure of viewport size.

```
h1 {  
  font-size: 13vw;  
  /* 1vw = 1% viewport width */  
}
```

Try viewport units. For bigger screens make the text proportionally bigger.



So different size screens, the heading scales accordingly



But consider what happens on landscape rather than portrait screens...  
The proportional of the text is completely different and you've changed the way the design hangs together.  
What you really want to happen is this...



The same size text gives the same proportions. But of course you still want the text to scale with the viewport size.

```
h1 {  
  font-size: 13vmin;  
  /* 1vmin = 1% viewport width or  
     height, whichever is smaller */  
}
```

Use vmin instead of vw. Still scales with screen size but chooses the smaller value.

```
h1 {  
  font-size: 13vmin;  
}  
  
.masthead__img {  
  height: 33vh;  
}
```

Viewport units not just for text size. They are units of length and can be used for anything. On our previous example you can make the masthead image proportional to screen size.

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So typically wide screen like this.

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---

But on a really shallow – or really wide – screen

Automatically header image and H1.

## But... performance?

1. Payload file size
2. Rendering timing

I know what you're thinking. Richard these fonts are all lovely and stuff, but they really slow things down.

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- 1. Introduction
  - 1.1. Notational Conventions
- 2. General Requirements
- 3. Overall file structure and basic data types
  - 3.1. Data types
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- 4. Font directory
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- 5. Compressed data format
  - 5.1. Transformed glyf table format
  - 5.2. Decoding of variable-length X and Y coordinates

W3C Candidate Recommendation

**WOFF File Format 2.0**  
W3C Candidate Recommendation 15 March 2016

**This version:**  
<http://www.w3.org/TR/2016/CR-WOFF2-20160315/>

**Latest version:**  
<http://www.w3.org/TR/WOFF2/>

**Previous Version:**  
<http://www.w3.org/TR/2015/WD-WOFF2-20150414/>

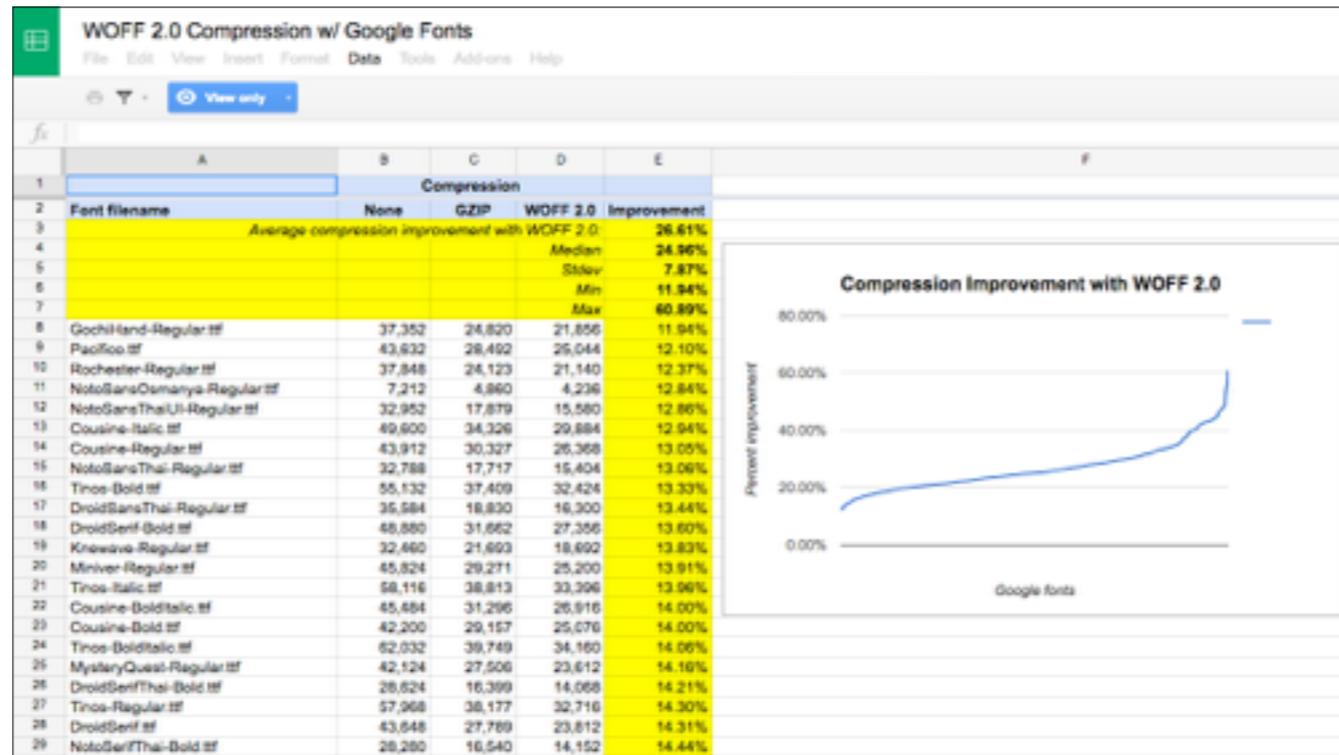
**Latest editors (draft):**

**“WOFF2 provides improved compression and thus lower use of network bandwidth, while still allowing fast decompression even on mobile devices.”**

WOFF File Format 2.0, W3C Candidate Recommendation

A webfont is about the same size as a single optimised image that you might send to a mobile device.

What about Twitter JavaScript? Order of magnitude bigger than a webfont.



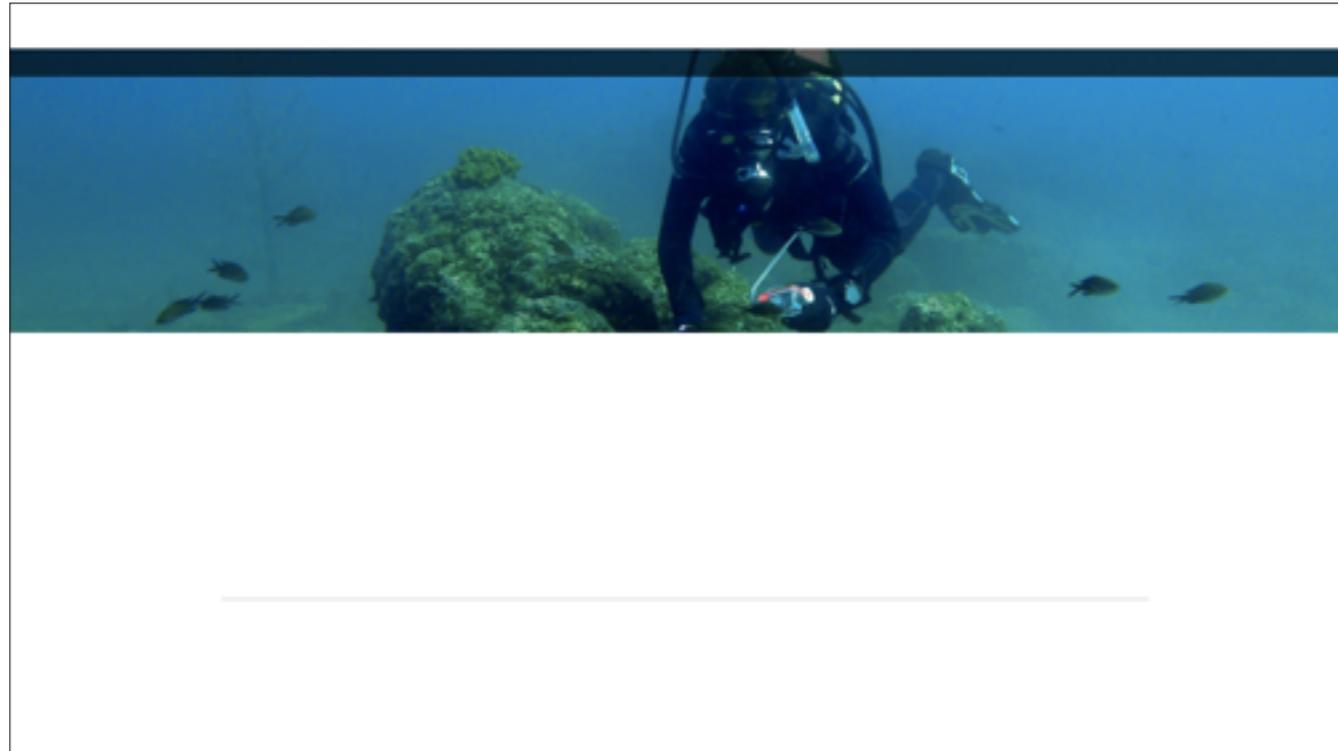
About 30% saving over WOFF.



Subsetting. You can massively reduce file size by removing characters and features you don't need. But be careful.



Or you end up with this abomination.  
Ser Gregor would not be happy



A big problem is this. What browsers do while wait for the fonts to load.  
The content's all there but you're not allowed to see it.

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Frankly I'd rather see the content first with fallback fonts – even ugly old Droid Serif – and then flip to the nicer experience when the fonts load.

Right now browsers would rather you saw nothing.



But now there's some CSS for that. As a designer, you can get to decide the behaviour for yourself.

```
@font-face {  
  font-family: "Open Sans";  
  font-weight: 400;  
  font-style: normal;  
  src: url("OpenSans.woff2") format("woff2"),  
        url("OpenSans.woff") format("woff");  
  font-display: swap;  
}
```

font-display goes in your @font-face rule and it tells the browser when to render text

<code>auto</code>	default
<code>swap</code>	fallback text is shown immediately until the webfont loads
<code>fallback</code>	text invisible for <100ms then shown with fallback font until webfont loads
<code>optional</code>	like fallback but browser decides whether a webfont should be used at all (depends on connection speed)

4 options.  
I would say this one 'swap' is the one you want.

**Bad news** is for now it's just in Blink browsers and behind the experimental flag. Also being worked on in Firefox.

## How We Load Web Fonts Progressively

Posted by [Scott](#) and [Zach](#) on 02/16/2015 (updated 11/1/2016).

*Note: This article's title was updated for clarity. It was formerly called "Font Loading Revisited with Font Events."*

Last month [we wrote about an approach](#) we'd been using to load web fonts in a more responsible manner than browsers tend to do by default. The purpose of the approach was to avoid a typically undesirable browser behavior we often refer to as the "FOIT" (Flash of Invisible Text), in which a browser hides all text that should be styled with a custom font until that font has finished loading.

### A brief recap on the FOIT

The FOIT tends to be most problematic in browsers like iOS Safari, which hides text for up to 30 seconds before giving up and rendering it with a default font, but it can also be seen in browsers with shorter hiding durations like Chrome, Firefox, and Opera as well. For example, here's how our site would load in Chrome on a 3G-ish connection if we were loading fonts in a standard way through CSS @font-face. Note that the page content is available for rendering at around 1.7 seconds in the

[filamentgroup.com/lab/font-events.html](http://filamentgroup.com/lab/font-events.html)

It's possible to subvert the browser's behaviour with Javascript and Font Events.

Non-canonical web standards for fiction

# A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO FONT LOADING STRATEGIES

— 12 July 2016 — Read this in about 20 minutes.

This guide is not intended for use with font icons, which have different loading priorities and use cases. Also, SVG is probably a better long term choice.

## JUMP TO:

- [Unceremonious @font-face](#)
- [font-display](#)
- [preload](#)
- [Don't use web fonts](#)
- [Inline Data URI](#)
- [Asynchronous Data URI](#)
- [FOUT with a Class](#)
- [FOFT, or FOUT with Two Stage Render](#)
- [CORS + FOET](#)
- [FOF + FOFT with](#)

zachleat.com/web/comprehensive-webfonts/

ZACH LEATHERMAN

- HOME
- ABOUT
- PROJECTS
- RESEARCH
- SPEAKING



But for even more details about how to really streamline the rendering including...



We had our hipsters here earlier. All making their own unique statement in the exactly the same way.

I said earlier the web looks like this:

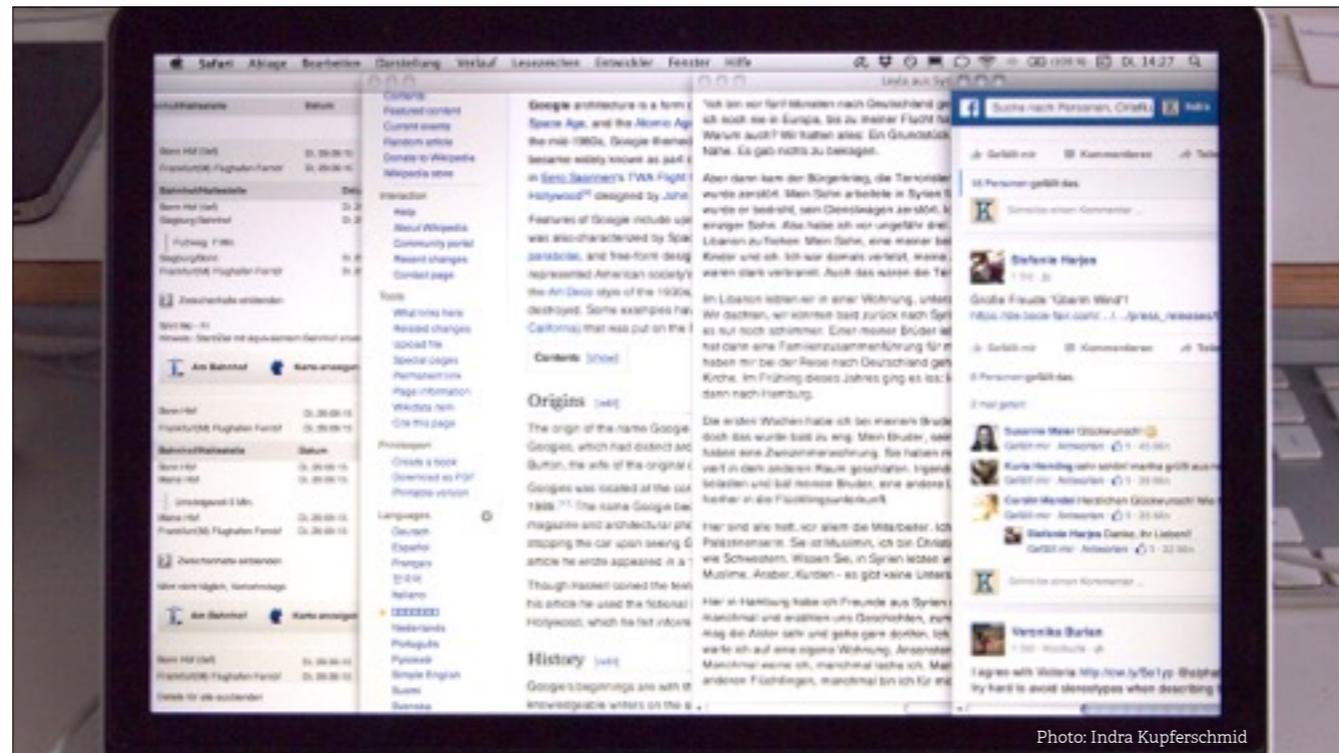
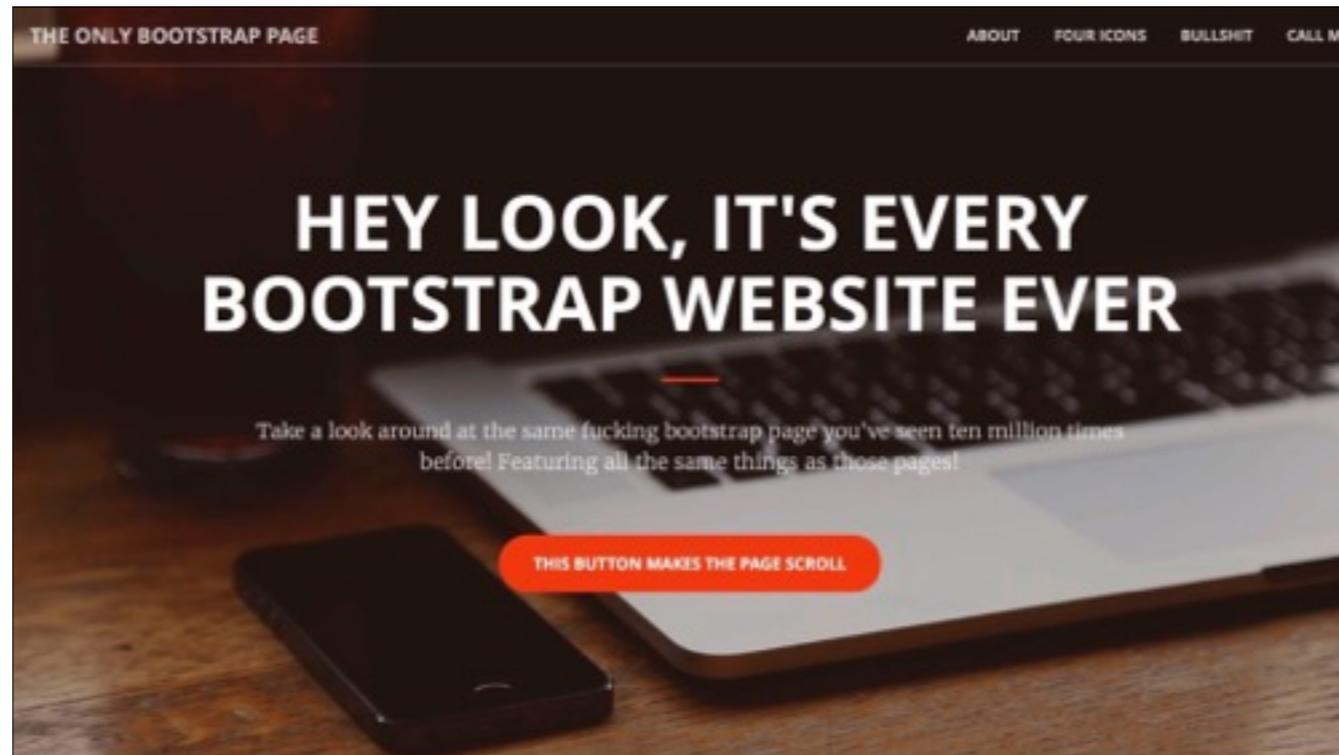


Photo: Indra Kupferschmid

But it's starting to look like this:



Big text... be careful what you wish for Richard.



**Which website will you be designing today?**



**“Have today’s designers  
stopped dreaming?”**

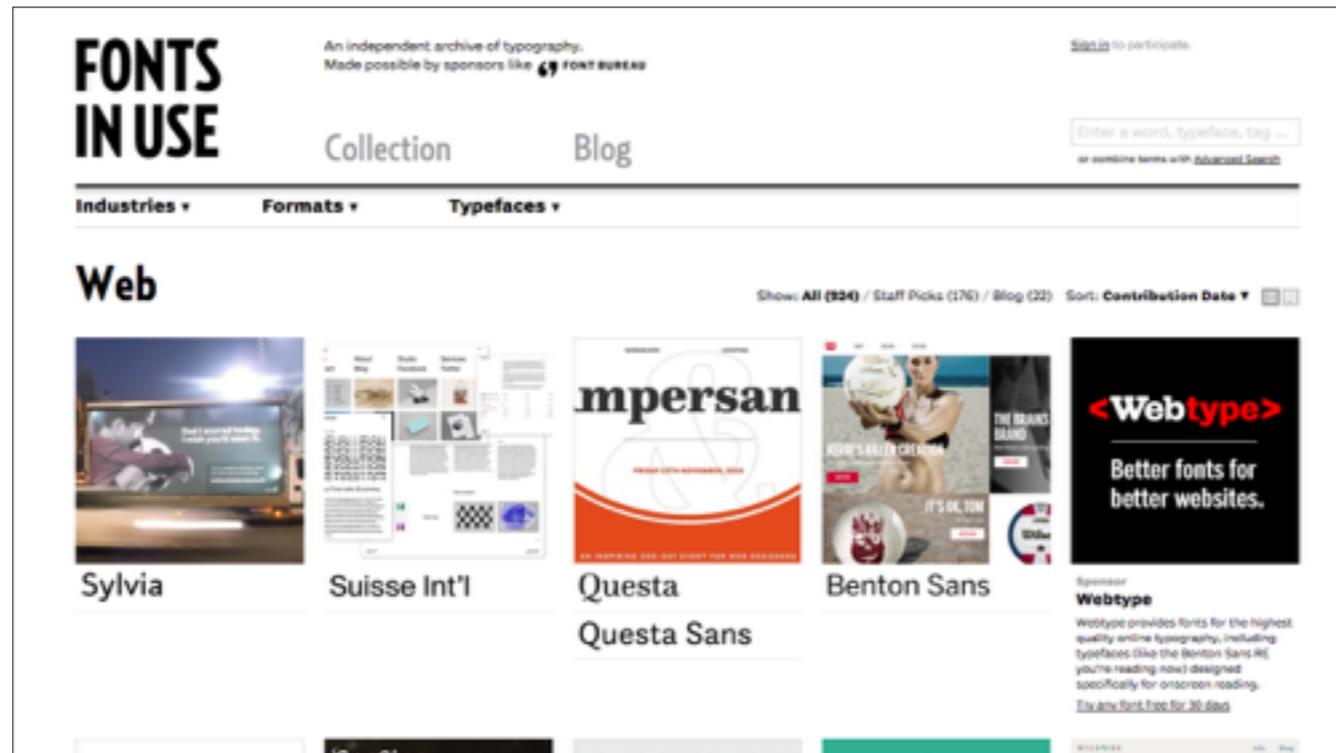
Elliot Jay Stocks



**“Is web design losing  
its soul?”**

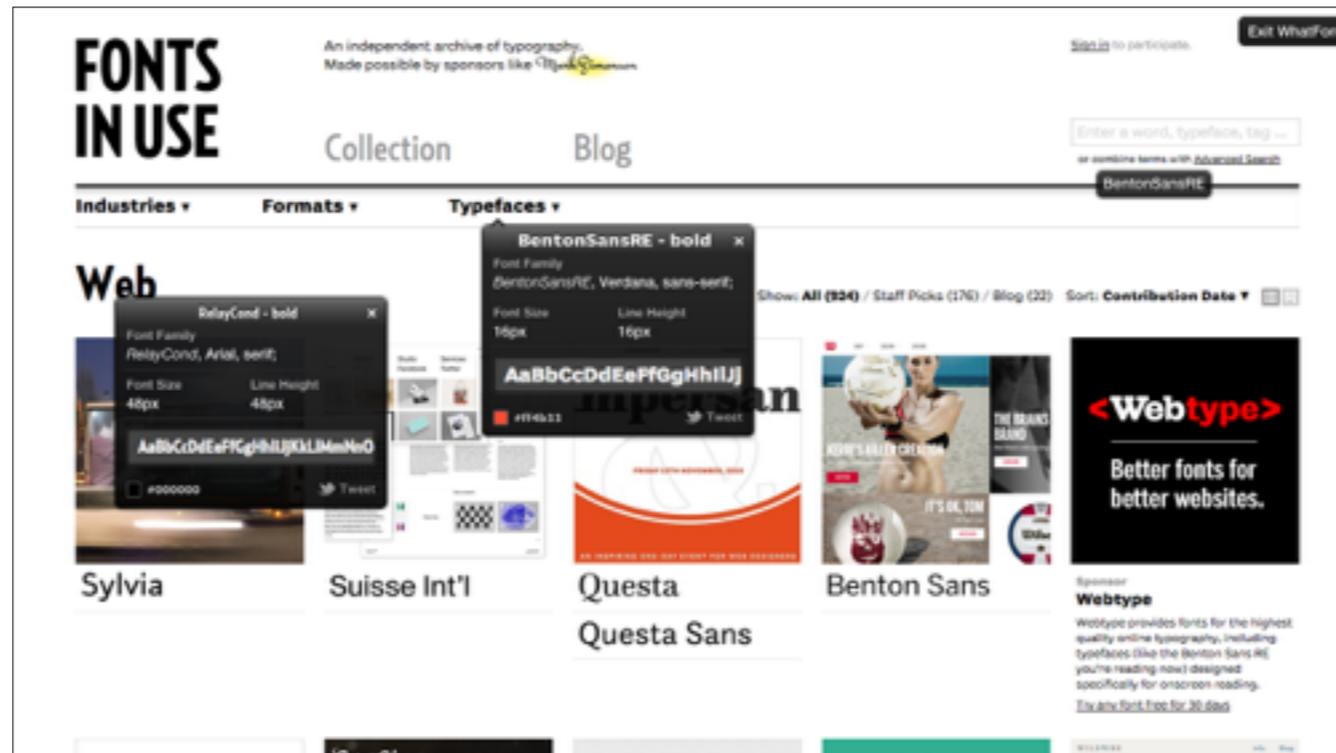
Noah Stokes

Existential crisis!

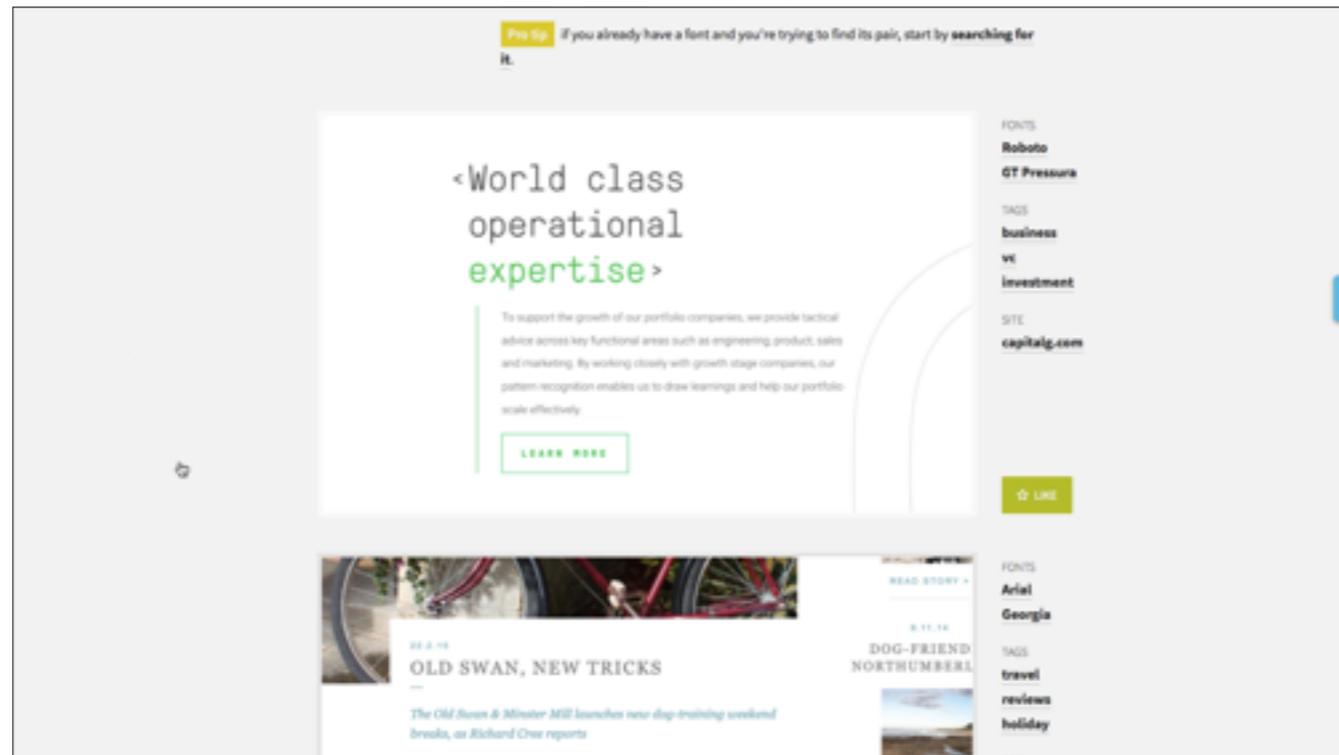


The best place to get your inspiration is where fonts are actually being used.

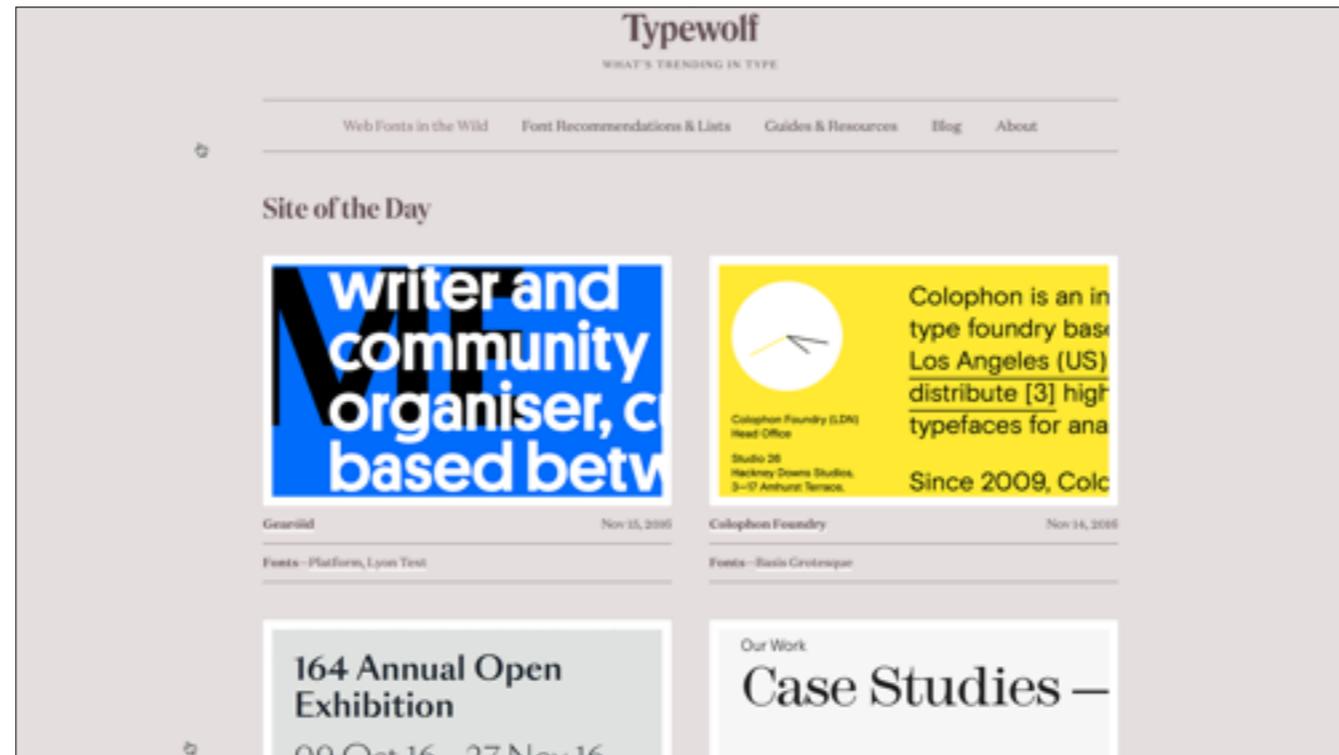
Screenshot nicely designed web sites, tear out pages of magazines, visit design review sites and read typography blogs. Identify graphic and web designers you like and try adopting their type palettes. Look at the font choices they use and they way they use them.



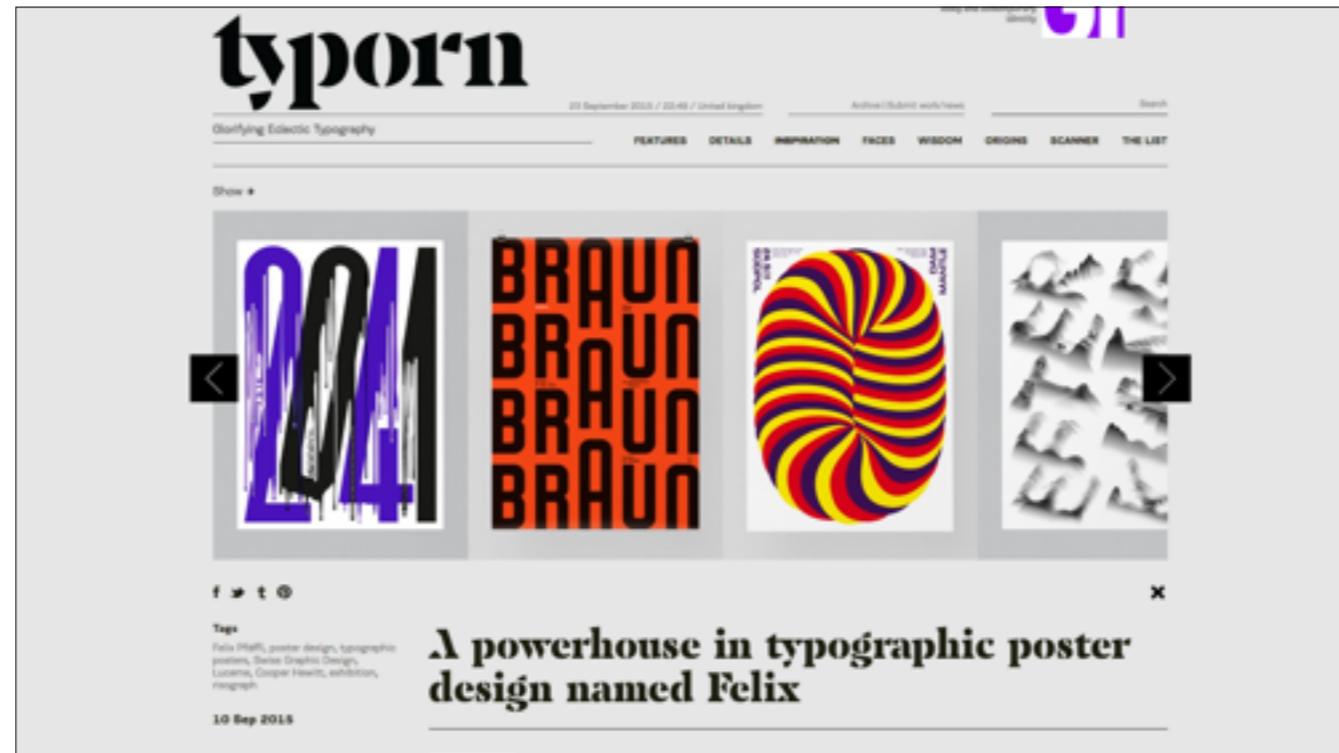
WhatFont is a great Chrome extension for inspecting which fonts are being used in a website.



This is typ.io which crowd-sources screenshots and details font pairings



Typewolf's site of the day is a superb resource.



Typorn is a beautiful place for type inspiration and writing.

Identify graphic and web designers you like and try adopting their type palettes. Look at the font choices they use and the way they use them.



Also spend time on type foundry websites. They are often great sources of beautiful and expressive typography, as they are trying their best to show off their fonts in ways for which they were designed.

If there's a typeface you particularly like, find other typefaces by that designer. You may find their other typefaces work in a way you like too.



Experiment. Use something like Typecast.

Once you've found a good direction, make sure to try variations alongside your body copy to fine tune your choice.

*Don't be reverential,  
dogmatic, or ordinary*

*Introduce  
& seduce*

Above all be expressive with your type.

Remember all type can have an affect on the reader, so take advantage of that and allow your type to have its own vernacular and impact. Don't be too reverential, dogmatic, or ordinary.

Be brave and push a few boundaries.

Use design and typography to interrupt, introduce and seduce.

**Richard Rutter, Clearleft**

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Slides: [speakerdeck.com/clagnut](https://speakerdeck.com/clagnut)