

THE IMAGINARY GUIDELINES



ASCENDER LINE

The line that runs along the tops of the highest ascender (which sometimes is higher or equivalent to the capline).

CAPLINE

Line that runs along the tops of the capital letters.

MEANLINE

The line that runs along the height of the body of lowercase letters.

BASELINE

The line where all the letterforms sit.

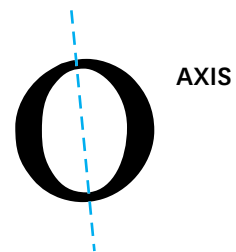
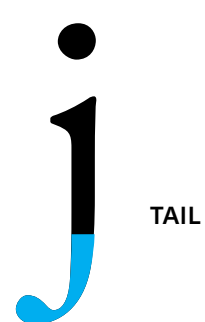
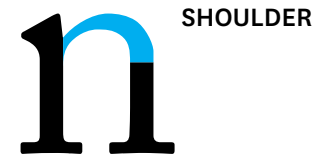
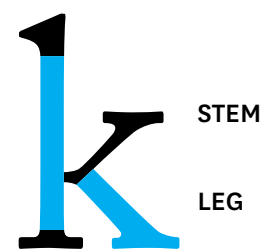
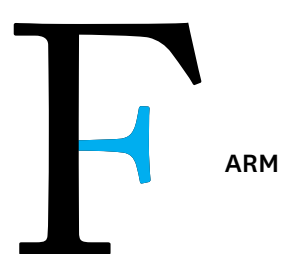
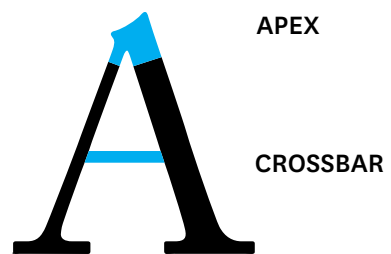
BEARD LINE

The line that runs along the bottoms of descenders.

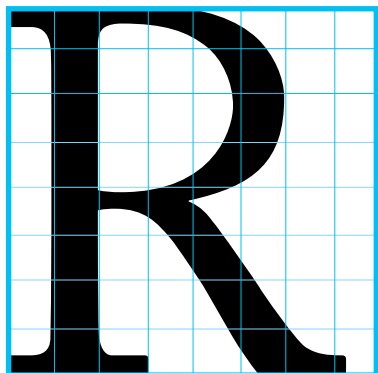
X-HEIGHT

The distance from the baseline to the meanline. Typically this is the height of the lowercase letters without their ascenders and descenders. It is most easily measured on the lowercase x.

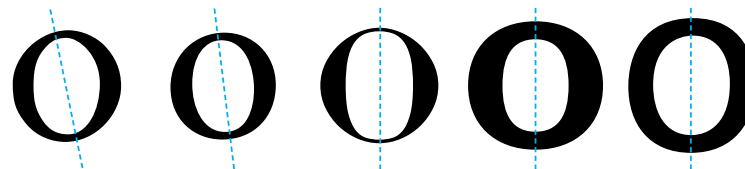
BREAKING IT INTO PARTS



PROPORTIONS OF THE LETTERFORM



STROKE-TO-HEIGHT RATIO



CONTRAST IN STROKE WEIGHT

EXPANDED **AND CONDENSED STYLES**

EXPANDED AND
CONDENSED STYLES



X-HEIGHT AND
PROPORTION

MEET THE CHARACTERS

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

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CAPITALS

LOWERCASE

SMALL CAPS

LINING AND OLD STYLE FIGURES

LIGATURES AND DIGRAPHS

PUNCTUATION, MATHEMATICAL
SIGNS, MONETARY SYMBOLS,
FRACTIONS AND SUPERIOR AND
INFERIOR FIGURES

ACCENTS AND ACCENTED
CHARACTERS

LOWERCASE A & SMALLCAP A

a A

OPTICAL RELATIONSHIPS



H A O T



LIKE ALL TWO-DIMENSIONAL SHAPES PERCEIVED BY THE EYE, LETTERS TOO ARE SUBJECT TO THE LAWS OF OPTICS.

UNITY OF DESIGN

AVWM jiru

LOOK FOR VISUAL SIMILARITIES
THAT BRING WHOLENESS TO
TYPOGRAPHY. LETTERFORMS
SHARE SIMILAR PARTS.

HISTORICAL CLASSIFICATION OF TYPEFACES

Old Style &

WEIGHT STRESS AT AN ANGLE (AS IN HANDWRITING). THE SERIFS ARE BRACKETED. THE TOP SERIFS ON THE LOWERCASE LETTERS ARE AT AN ANGLE.

Transitional &

CONTRAST BETWEEN THICK AND THIN STROKES IS GREATER THAN IN OLD STYLE TYPEFACES. LOWERCASE SERIFS ARE MORE HORIZONTAL, AND STRESS SHIFTS TO A LESS DIAGONAL AXIS.

Modern &

EXTREME CONTRAST BETWEEN THICK AND THIN STROKES. THIN STROKES ARE REDUCED TO A HAIR-LINE. THE WEIGHT STRESS IS VERTICAL. SERIFS ARE HORIZONTAL HAIRLINES.

Egyptian &

HEAVY SQUARE OR RECTANGULAR SERIFS THAT ARE USUALLY UNBRACKETED. THE STRESS IS OFTEN MINIMAL, IN SOME SLABS ALL STROKES ARE THE SAME WEIGHT.

Sans Serif &

ABSCENCE OF SERIFS. IN MANY SANS SERIF TYPEFACES STROKE IS UNIFORM WITH LITTLE OR NO CONTRAST BETWEEN THICK AND THIN STROKES. STRESS IS ALMOST ALWAYS VERTICAL. MANY SANS ARE GEOMETRIC IN THEIR CONSTRUCTION.

VISUAL FEATURES

b b b b b b

SERIFS

A A A A A A A

WEIGHT

AAAAAAAAA

WIDTH

h h h

POSTURE

VISUAL FEATURES

A A A A

THICK/THIN CONTRAST

d d d d d

X-HEIGHT

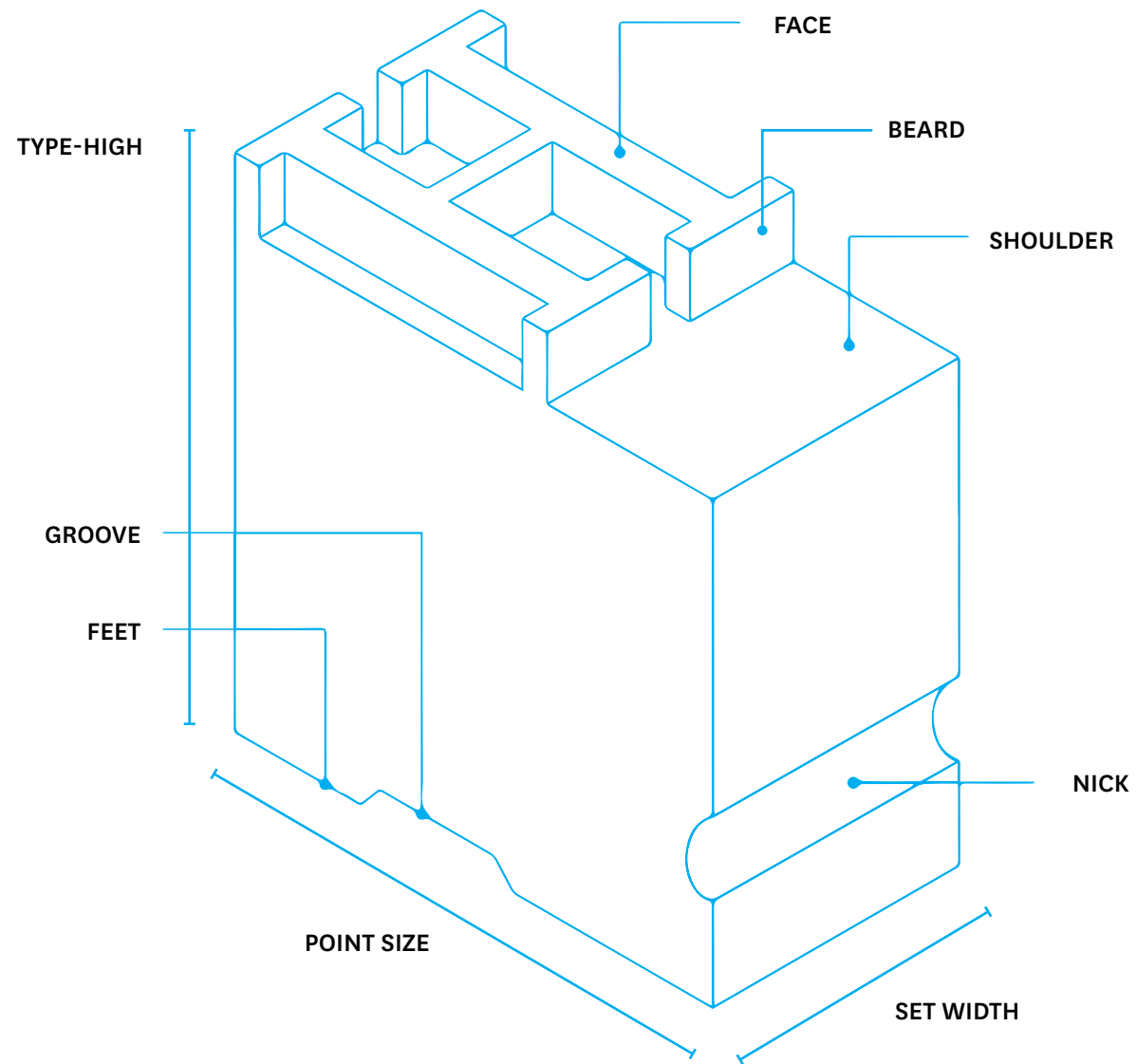
dp dp dp dp dp

ASCENDERS/DESCENDERS

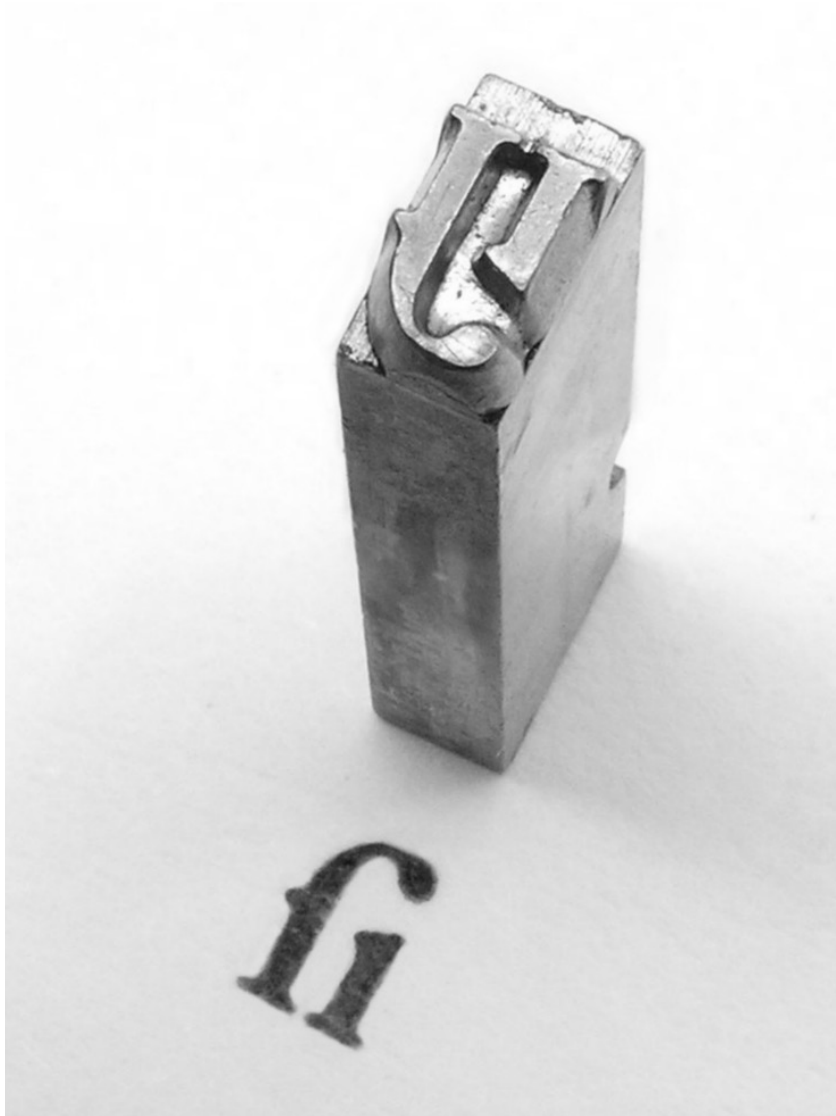
O O

STRESS

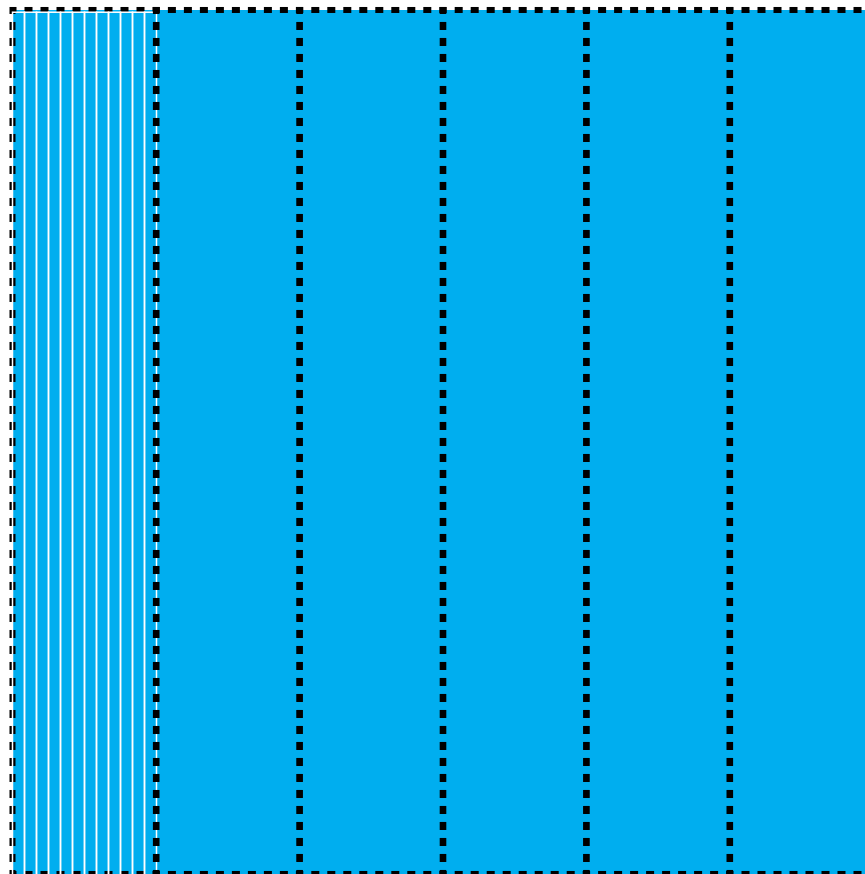
METAL TYPE ANATOMY



METAL TYPE



PICAS AND POINTS

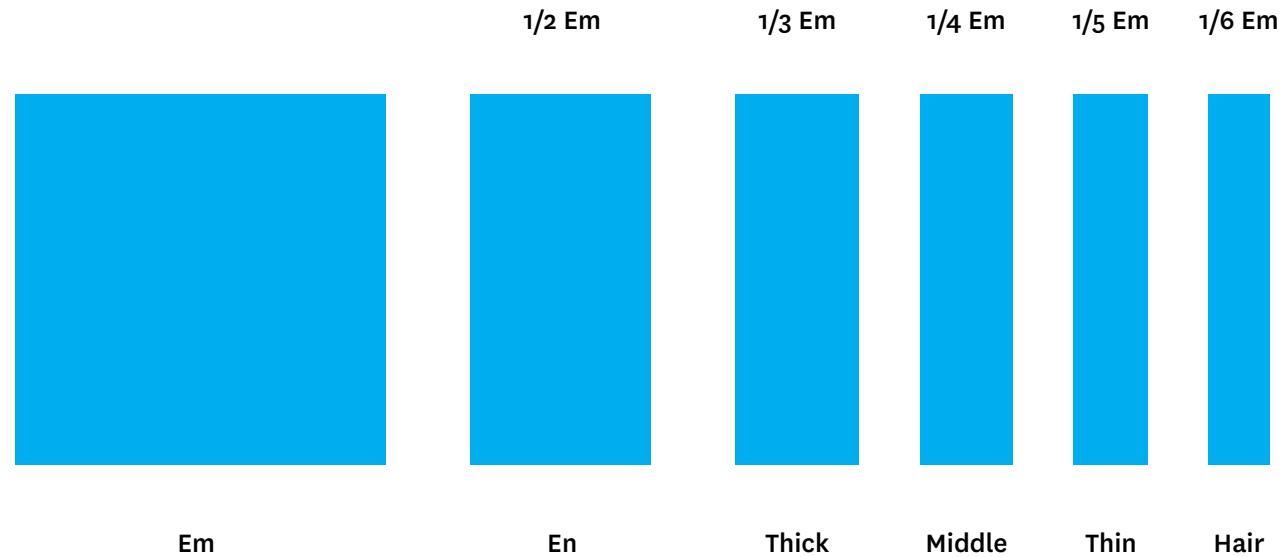


12 POINTS = 1 PICA

6 PICAS = 1 INCH

72 POINTS = 1 INCH

SPACING



One morning, when Gregor Samsa woke from troubled dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a horrible vermin.

One morning, when Gregor Samsa woke from troubled dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a horrible vermin.

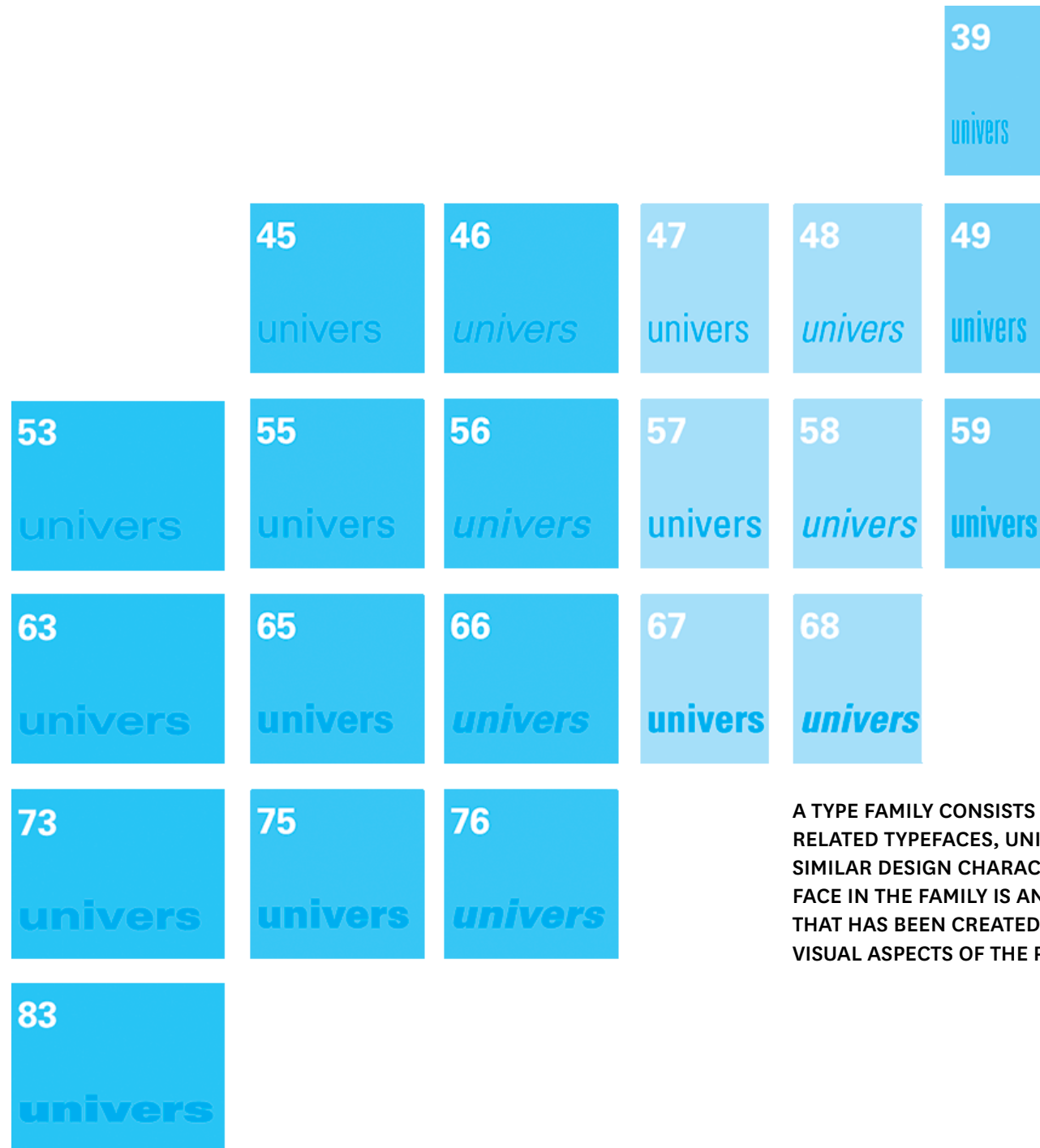
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THE TYPE FAMILY



A TYPE FAMILY CONSISTS OF A GROUP OF RELATED TYPEFACES, UNIFIED BY A SET OF SIMILAR DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS. EACH FACE IN THE FAMILY IS AN INDIVIDUAL ONE THAT HAS BEEN CREATED BY CHANGING VISUAL ASPECTS OF THE PARENT FONT.