

# ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

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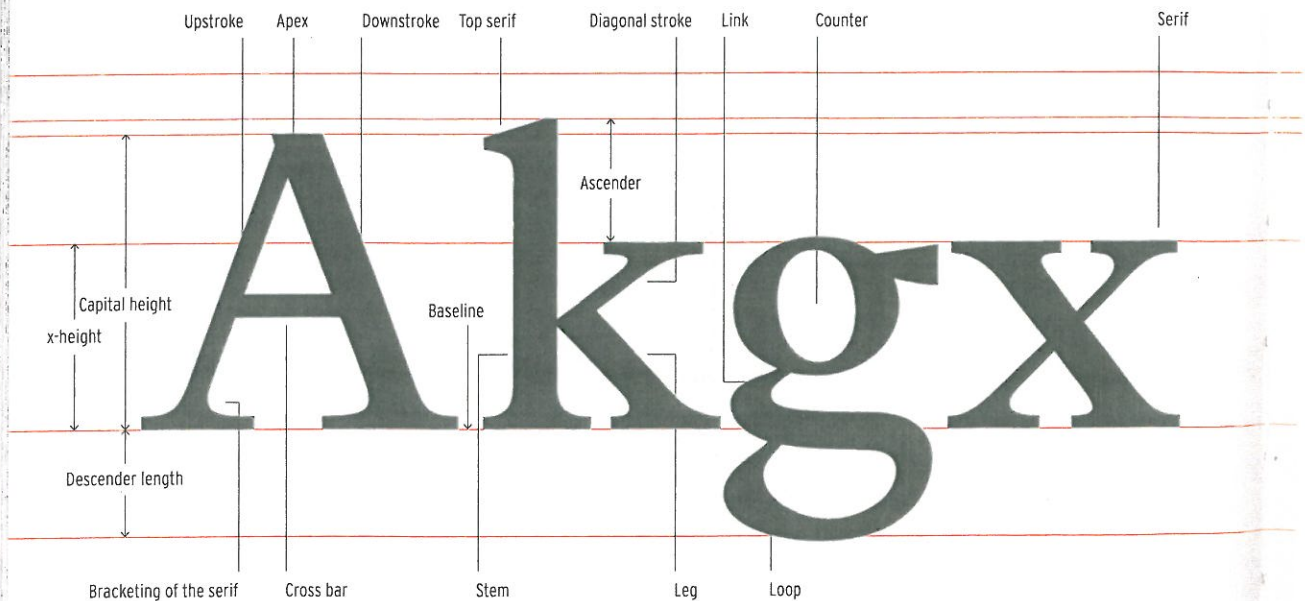
**Small capitals** Small capitals are smaller versions of capital letters; not reduced capitals, but especially designed small capitals, which can often be ordered with a certain type family as a so-called Expert or SC font. In height, these SMALL CAPITALS are slightly bigger than the x-height of lowercase letters, and they have a matching weight. Generally, they are proportionately slightly wider than CAPITALS and are used in texts that include many abbreviations or successive capitals. Small capitals provide a better balanced appearance in cases where capitals would make the look of a block of text too busy. It must also be said that the reduced capital-setting, which is optional in most computer programmes, causes the appearance to become too light because the line thickness of the character is reduced. So in general, the use of small capitals is preferred. And in this case too, availability has greatly increased. Only the text letter (regular or book) used to have a small capital version, but nowadays all variants of most typefaces have one. Small capitals are now also available in italics. In OpenType versions of typefaces they are even included in the same font and can easily be accessed in the OpenType menu.

Hans Eduard Meier's Syntax was designed in 1954 and first released by Stempel in 1968. In the late 1990s the design was extensively revised, adding features such as the small capitals shown above/at left. Small capitals were first introduced ca. 1525. 500 years later, they are regarded as a related variant of a typeface, like the italic.



Parts of a Monotype Bembo Semi-bold letter. On the right hand page in red: a ligature with the contours of the individual letters 'f' and 'i' superimposed.

**Ligatures, diphthongs and logotypes** Ligatures are combinations of characters that were designed because, in metal typesetting, the overhanging ascender in the letter 'f' would crash into an ascender or the dot of an 'i' if it directly followed the 'f'. Of course, the sorts couldn't overlap as they can in photographic or digital typesetting. In combinations of for instance the 'f' and 'i', ligatures give better results in photographic or digital setting as well because the



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In the '&' symbol of the Demos Italic and the Galliard Italic, the separate letters (et) are still clearly visible. In the Alega on the far right, the designer has departed from a clear picture of the combination. Although this combination strictly speaking forms part of the logotypes, it is more correct to call the Demos and Galliard version a ligature.



irac- scen- rectly gra- liga- : the

On the left page: a capital and a reduced capital side by side. The whole letter has become thinner. It is clear that the real small capital above much better matches the lowercase letter 'h' next to it. The typeface is the Monotype Centaur.

ascender of the 'f' and the dot of the letter 'i' are designed to join instead of arbitrarily overlapping. If extra letter spacing is used in a text, however, these combinations of characters have to be set separately. The image below gives an example. The ligature is indicated in red and the separate letters that inel-egantly overlap are outlined with a black outline. This is not the case for all typefaces; with the sans-serifs this problem hardly ever occurs, although there are exceptions that prove the rule. The overhanging ascenders in 'f' and 'i' of the otherwise elegant sans serif Monotype Gill Italic clash, while this is not the case for many other seriffed types. Logotypes are less clearly visible combinations of characters such as the ampersand or '&' symbol. This combination is also made up of ligatures. The '&' symbol was originally a ligature too, formed of the letters 'e' and 't', the Latin word 'et' which means 'and'. Some designers enjoy bringing out the letters in the ligatures again, as the above image shows. Typographic diphthongs or ligated vowels are rarely-used letter combinations. They mainly convey that a word has a special pronunciation. The French word 'œil' (eye) is such an example.

