Type design is the creation of typefaces. See Hoefler & Frere-Jones' type design company for exquisite contemporary examples of this kind of work: http://www.typography.com

Typography is the use of type in graphic design, or in visual work in general. Posters, books, newspapers, Web sites and movie titles are all examples of typography. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typography for a good general introduction to the subject.

Type consists of some sort of mechanical letterforms that can be used over and over while *lettering* is one unique, hand-made iteration of written material. As Ellen Lupton writes, "I subscribe to the rather rigid theory that typography is about readymade, reproducible families of letterforms. A typeface is an abstracted system designed to accommodate any text you throw at it. Typeface designers create fonts, and typographers arrange them in space and time." Lettering includes calligraphy, graffitti, and all sorts of visually amazing letters created by hand.
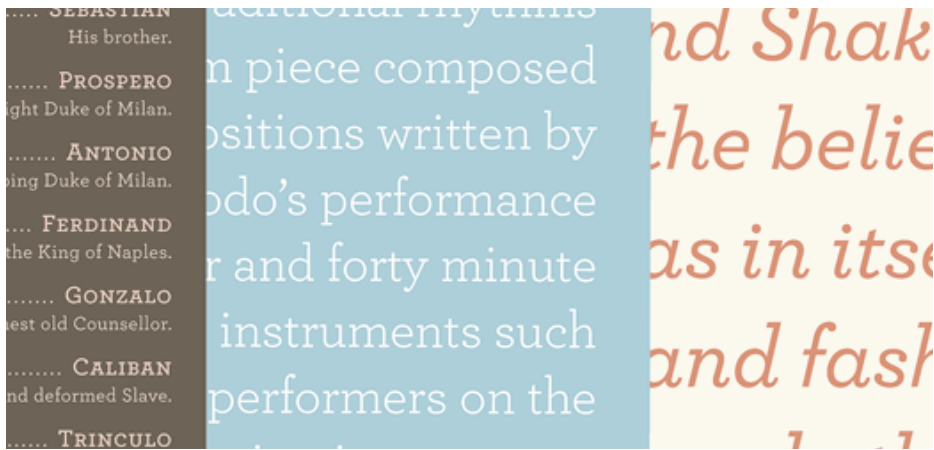
TYPE
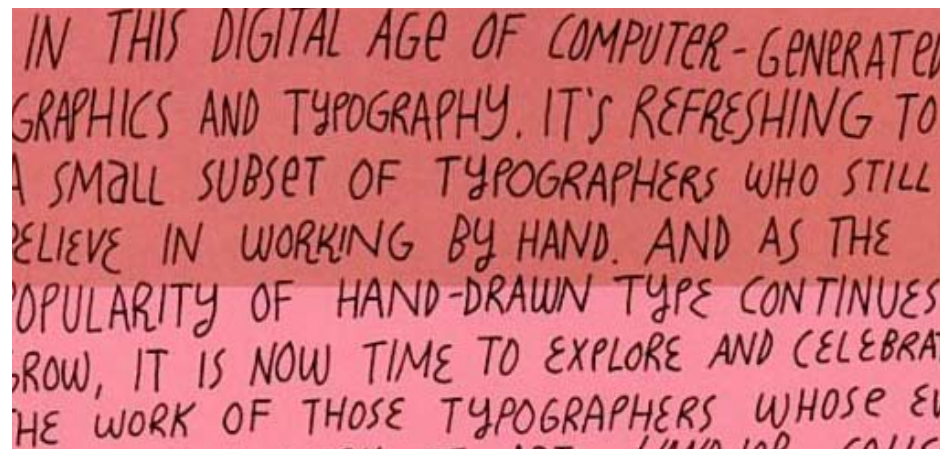
LETTERING

A *typeface* is a set of glyphs, or characters, drawn in a consistent style. A *glyph* is a building block of writing, an individual mark that contributes to verbal meaning in written material. Examples of glyphs are: letters, numbers, punctuation marks, diacritical marks (ie: accents) and special characters such as ligatures, swashes, alternate characters. Even the space between words is a glyph.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQ

RSTUVWXYZ1234567890!

@#$%^&*,.?;:'"(){}[]ABCDEFG

HIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ADOBE GARAMOND PRO TYPEFACE

abcdefghijklmnopq

ABCDEFGHIJKL

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

!@#$%^&*,.?;:'" °¿ (){}[]

áâäàåãçéÊëèíîïìñÔôöòõšúûüùýÿž

fi fl ff ffi ffl fj Th

aenrtzt

Q

A *typeface* is a particular style for letterforms that can carry into various weights and structures, yielding a *family* of types that resemble each other. A *font* is one particular member of that family. In metal typesetting, each font took so much labor to produce that a single font (including the point size) was significant. Today, the terms are used interchangeably. Each of the examples below is a font, while the family is the Jenson typeface.

Jenson Light 36 point

Jenson Light Italic 36 point

Jenson Regular 36 point

Jenson Italic 36 point

Jenson Semibold 36 point

Jenson Semibold Italic 36 point

Jenson Bold 36 point

Jenson Bold Italic 36 point

Axis / Stress

The angle of the pen nib when drawing calligraphy leads to thinner and thicker parts of a single letterform. The direction in which a curved stroke changes weight is called the *stress*. Draw a line through the thinnest parts of the round strokes in a typeface to reveal the *axis*.
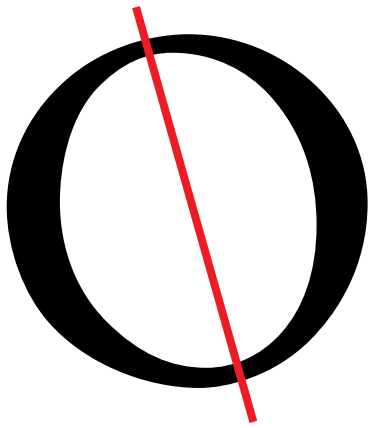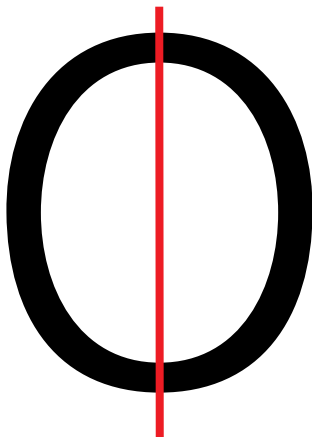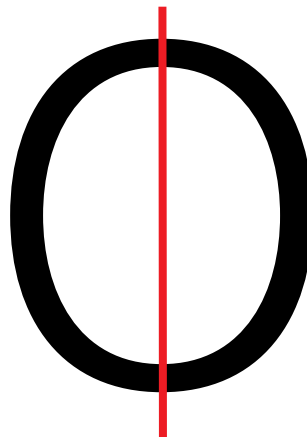
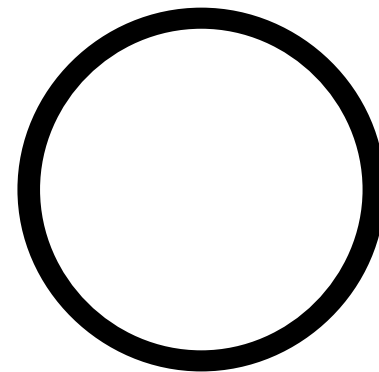ADOBE JENSON PRO [HUMANIST/OLDSTYLE]
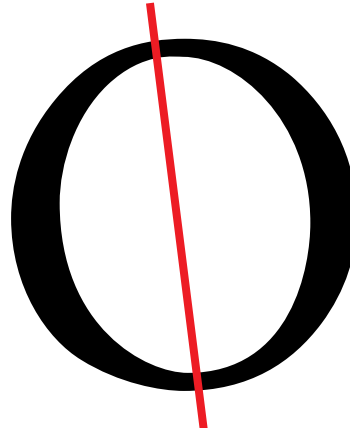
CASLON [HUMANIST/OLDSTYLE]
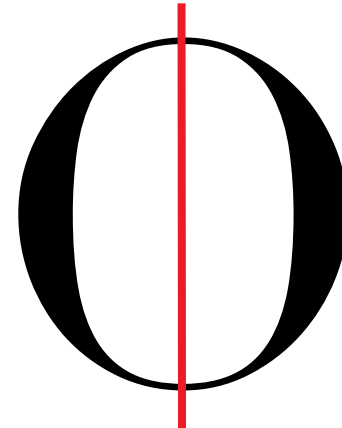
DIDOT [MODERN]

FRUTIGER [HUMANIST SANS SERIF]

UNIVERS [TRANSITIONAL SANS SERIF]

FUTURA [GEOMETRIC SANS SERIF] NO STRESS

Display or headline type appears large and in small amounts (such as the headline in an advertisement or the title of a magazine or newspaper article). *Body or text type* appears small and in large amounts (such as the main text in a book, magazine or newspaper article.) Some typefaces were designed specially to serve as display types, others as body types, and others were created to play either role.

Thinking with Type

Thinking with Type

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Type is measured in points and picas.
12 points = 1 pica
6 picas = 1 inch

Type size is the height of the entire glyph set, from the top of the tallest glyph to the bottom of the lowest glyph. This is Jenson 60-point:

abcdefgABCDEFG

60 POINTS

Two typefaces set in the same point size may appear quite different in size, due to differences in x-height, line weight and set width. Compare Jenson and Minion and Helvetica, in same point size:

HAMS   HAMS   HAMS

60-PT TYPE

Equat. Rat lobortisl ipit, consectet, quisci bla ad magna faccumsan estin hendre feu feum nullutatuer in verilisi tat ilit, con et wis eum alit aliquatin hendit alit autat iurem vulputat. Dui ex ea faccum am, se con henibh exerostrud tisi tincin erit voloreet num dunt wisl utpat.

Equat. Rat lobortisl ipit, consectet, quisci bla ad magna faccumsan estin hendre feu feum nullutatuer in verilisi tat ilit, con et wis eum alit aliquatin hendit alit autat iurem vulputat. Dui ex ea faccum am, se con henibh exerostrud tisi tincin erit voloreet num dunt wisl utpat.

Equat. Rat lobortisl ipit, consectet, quisci bla ad magna faccumsan estin hendre feu feum nullutatuer in verilis tat ilit, con et wis eum alit aliquatin hendit alit autat iurem vulputat. Dui ex ea faccum am, se con henibh exerostrud tisi tincin erit voloreet nur dunt wisl utpat.

12-PT TYPE

Point size cannot predict how much horizontal space typeset text will occupy. Compare Jenson (in black) and Minion (in red), in same point size:

HKN

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO

JENSON

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO

MINION

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvw
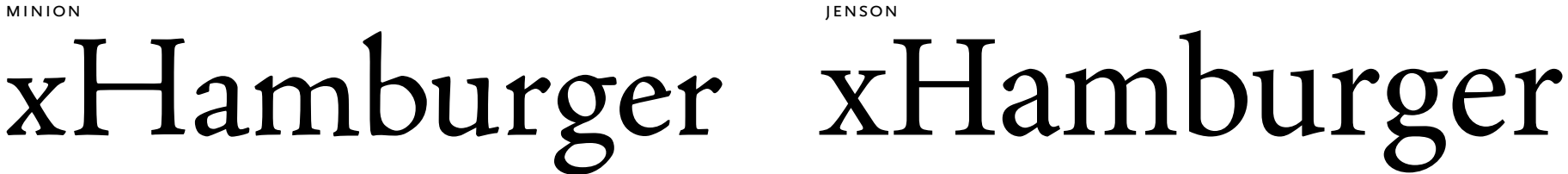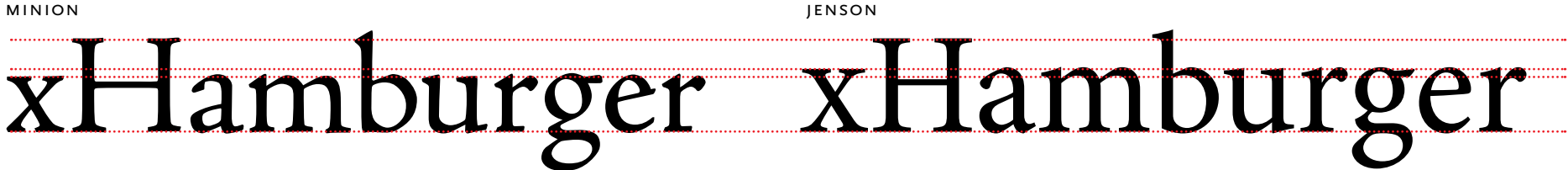
JENSON

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvw

MINION

X-height

X-height is the height of the main body of the lowercase letters (you could think of it as the height of the lowercase x). A tall x-height can make one typeface appear larger than another. Compare Jenson and Minion, in same point size; they share the same baseline and cap height, but their x-heights vary, making Minion appear larger.

MINION

JENSON

xHamburger xHamburger

MINION

JENSON

xHamburger xHamburger

Stroke weight is a way to compare the relative boldness of different fonts. Jenson Regular has a heavier stroke weight than Jenson Light. Garamond has a lighter stroke weight than Jenson.

Stroke weight contrast is the degree of difference in stroke weight within a single font. Of the three typefaces below right, Didot has the greatest stroke weight contrast, while News Gothic has no stroke weight contrast.

Lorem ipsum
JENSON LIGHT

Lorem ipsum
JENSON REGULAR

Lorem ipsum
JENSON SEMIBOLD

Lorem ipsum
JENSON BOLD

Lorem ipsum
GARAMOND

Lorem ipsum
JENSON

LOREM
JENSON

LOREM
DIDOT

LOREM
NEWS GOTHIC