Choosing Type

Choose faces that suit the task as well as the subject

If you have been given the task of designing a book on bicycle racing, it may be some's instincts to choose a typeface who's "O" has spokes and "T" has handlebars. Shift your thinking. First, it should be a good typeface. Second, it should be good type for comfortable long-distance reading. Third, it will be a type sympathetic to the theme: lean, strong, swift and perhaps Italian. It should be free of excess ornament or freight.

Choose faces that can furnish whatever special effect your require

If you have text that is dense with numbers. First look at the numbers in the type of consideration. If you need small caps, it will narrow down the possibilities of typefaces. If you need a large type family for use throughout the document, it will narrow down to possibilities even further.

Choose faces whose spirit and character is in keeping with the text.

Letterforms have character, spirit and personality. If, for example, you are setting a text by a women, you might consider a typeface designed by a woman. A book on Paris, you might consider a French typeface such as Garamond, Jannon, Mendoza, Méridien, Vendôme and many others.

Combining Type

Pairing

Frutiger   Méridien   Univers

If you have chosen Meridien as the typeface for the body text, you may look to Adrian Frutiger's other typefaces for a suitable companion. If you look at the structure of the letterforms, Frutiger would be a much better pairing because they are more similar. An example of this lies in the "e".

Pairing

Gabocse escobaG

Gabocse escobaG

Gabocse escobaG

1st: Syntax & Minion
2nd: Futura & Bodoni
3rd: Helvetica & Clarendon

Pairing

An interview with Alice Savoie

Alice Savoie started out with a foundation course in Applied Arts and then studied graphic design and typography for four years in Paris. She then set sail for the UK to follow the MA in Typeface Design at Reading University. Upon graduating in 2007 she relocated to London to work as a graphic designer. In March 2008 Alice joined Monotype Imaging as a full-time type designer.

Syntax & Minion

Rags

Rags: Good vs. Bad

Not many days after we heard the church-bell tolling for a long time, and looking over the gate we saw a long, strange black coach that was covered in black cloth and was drawn by black horses; after that came another and another and another, and all were black, while the bell kept tolling, tolling.

Not many days after we heard the church-bell tolling for a long time, and looking over the gate we saw a long, strange black coach that was covered in black cloth and was drawn by black horses; after that came another and another and another, and all were black, while the bell kept tolling, tolling.

When setting type with a ragged margin (i.e. not justified on both sides), pay attention to the shape created by the ragged line endings. A good rag should flow in and out from line to line in small increments. A bad rag will create (distracting) large areas of white space in the margin. You should not rely on the line breaks generated by software, but instead get into the habit of looking for poor rags and correcting them by manually adjusting your line breaks.

Rags: Good vs. Bad

Again, the rag should shift in and out in small increments. Avoid creating shapes or large exaggerated ins and outs with the shape of the rag.