

Class 5: CSS Typography

What is typography?

CSS typography

Web typography in transition

Font services

Serif and sans-serif fonts

How to choose a typeface

Alignment, line spacing, measure and vertical rhythm

Units

References

Learning Web Design by Jennifer Robbins (5th Edition)

HTML & CSS by Jon Duckett

On Web Typography by Jason Santa Maria

Web Typography by Richard Rutter

Flexible Typesetting by Tim Brown

A Practical Guide to Designing for the Web by Mark Boulton

What is Typography? by David Jury

<http://webtypography.net/>

<https://practicaltypography.com/>

<https://designingfortheweb.co.uk/part3/chapter11/> (Part 3: Chapters 11-14)

<https://www.webstyleguide.com/wsg3/8-typography/index.html>

<https://alistapart.com/article/how-we-read>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ardZEhivV0> – Tips for great typography tutorial

<https://www.pierrickcalvez.com/journal/a-five-minutes-guide-to-better-typography>

<https://cssreference.io/typography/>

Class 5 Homework

Read: Chapter 12 of Learning Web Design

or Chapter 8 of Head First HTML and CSS

or Chapter 12 of HTML & CSS

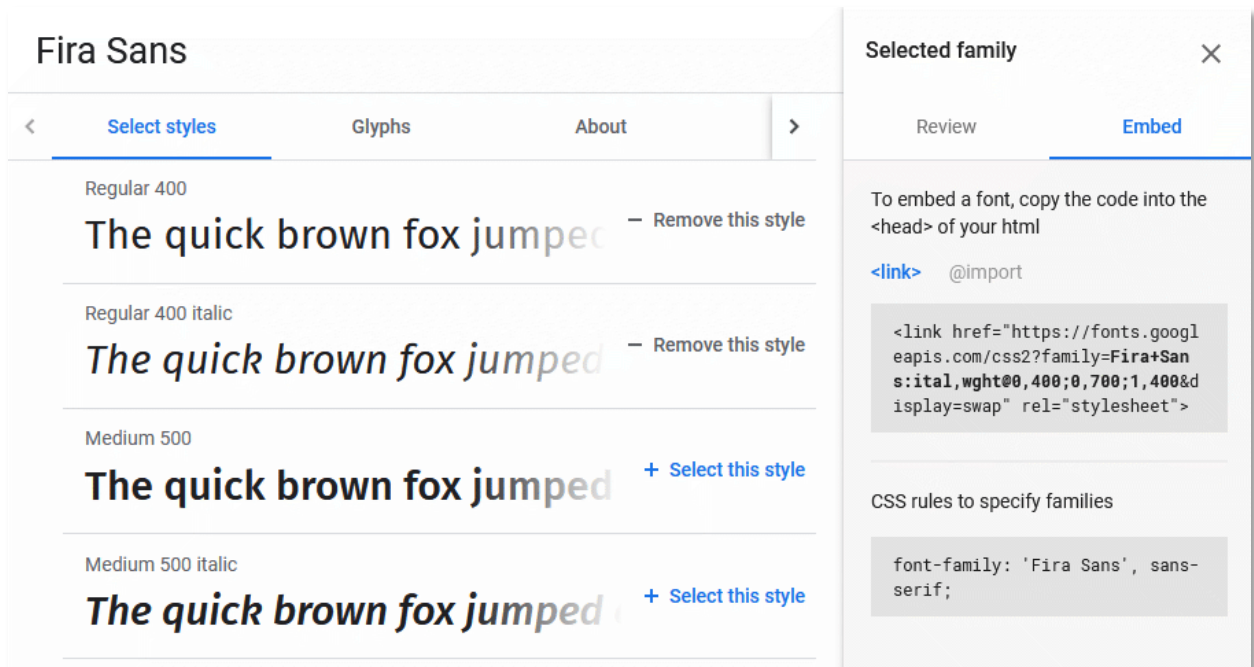
Part 3 of [A Practical Guide to Designing for the Web](#)

and/or Chapter 5 of Above the Fold

Any or all of On Web Typography

View: [Beginner's guide to styling text with CSS](#) by Kevin Powell (26 mins)

Task 1: Continue the development of your three designed objects website, consider the use of CSS to control and design the typography. Consider concepts such as visual hierarchy, vertical rhythm, measure, and alignment to improve the readability of your mini site. For this project, look at the range of typefaces available on the Google Fonts service and select one or more (two maximum) that are appropriate to your project site. Develop a typographic style and apply it to your site.



Don't forget that to use Google Fonts on your web pages, you must link to the fonts using a `<link>` element in HTML and then specify the font in CSS using the **font-family** property. Fortunately, Google Fonts makes this very easy. All you need to do is select the fonts you want to use, click the "Embed" tab and the code snippets are provided for you. You'll have to add additional font fall-backs to your font stack, using "web safe" fonts, but that's about it.

If you'd like to experiment more with web fonts, use the [CSS Workshop files](#). The [Google fonts](#) service is a good option to begin your exploration of web fonts.

On Web Typography

by Jason Santa Maria

How type works

There are no rules in typography.

This is the hardest fact for people to grapple with when they try to familiarize themselves with the rules, because there aren't any. We have principles, best practices, and methods that work *most* of the time, but nothing that works *all* of the time. We can do our best to ensure that something is durable: good-sized type for reading, plenty of whitespace, pleasing typefaces, and visual appeal, but we can't account for all environments and devices, which are often in flux. Learning typography is about figuring out what choices work best for each situation.

Whether we're the designers or the readers, we're all part of the audience for those choices. From the moment we wake up to the time we go to bed, we're bombarded by type: newspapers and magazines, signs on subways and freeways, emails and websites, the myriad interfaces and labels adorning everything we touch. We're exposed to more type each day than at any other point in history. Type is pervasive — and thus so is typography — yet *bad* typography remains. Why?

Put plainly, good typography is hard. And the sheer number of options we have can feel overwhelming.

Course materials: [Design for Web Content](#)

Take care to ensure your CSS is well organised and use comments to create section headings. It's typical to maintain a separate section for your typographic rules:

```
/*===== TYPOGRAPHY =====*/
body {
  font-family: "Lato", Calibri, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;
  font-weight: 400;
  color: #090909;
  background-color: #e5edf6;
}
h1, h2 {
  font-family: "Playfair Display", Georgia, "Times New Roman", Times, serif;
  color: #194a82;
}
h1 {
  font-size: 4.0em;
}
h2 {
  font-size: 2.4em;
  line-height: 1.2;
  margin-top: 1.8em;
}
p, li {
  font-size: 1.2em;
  line-height: 1.4em;
  margin-top: 0.4em;
}
p + p {
  margin-top: 1.6em;
}
```

Minimise your CSS code by taking advantage of font property inheritance. In theory, you shouldn't need to use the **font-family** property more than twice on a simple site, once as a default for body and once as an override for headings.

Top Tips

When designing your type, avoid using colour initially. Select an appropriate typeface for the content. Focus on the balance of text and whitespace, the contrast between headings and body text. Carefully consider the line height of your body text to provide a balanced visual density and good readability. Consider the line length (measure), and vertical rhythm. Spacing is crucial, especially the space between headings and paragraphs. Headings should be visually associated with the text they belong to. Visual hierarchy is also critical in allowing readers to understand document structure.

Using the next-sibling combinator

The [next-sibling combinator](#) (also referred to as the adjacent sibling selector) can be incredibly useful for typographic design. It selects only elements that immediately follow the specified element. For example, you can select all paragraphs that immediately follow another paragraph by using **p + p**. This has the effect of selecting all paragraphs except the first. This is useful if you are setting the space *between* paragraphs using **margin-top**. See the example above.

Course materials: [Design for Web Content](#)

CSS has [many selector types](#) and not just the [type selector](#) that we've been using so far. We'll cover other selector types in subsequent weeks, but for this exercise, see if you can style the content using only type, next-sibling combinator, and [descendant combinator](#) selectors. In other words, do not use classes or IDs.

For your blog

Task 2: Find 3 examples of sites with beautiful typography and explain why you think they work. Add any useful references for web typography to your blog.