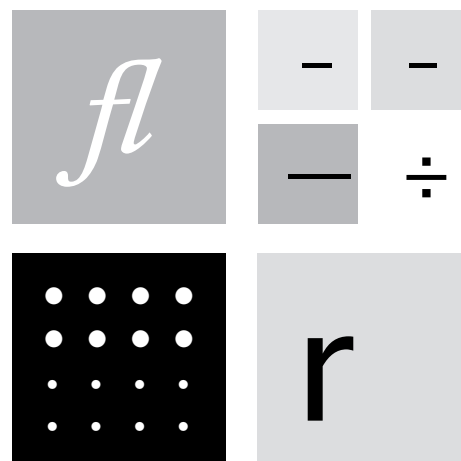
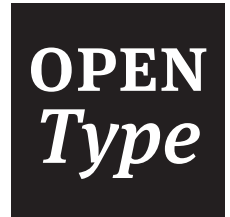


What is OpenType?

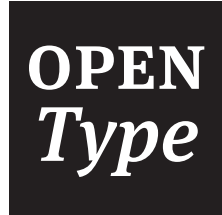




WHAT IS OPENTYPE?

Introduction

OpenType® is a modern font format developed by Adobe® and Microsoft® to provide users with an accessible and advanced typographic toolset. OpenType improves on PostScript and TrueType just as the DVD trumped the video cassette. When deciding what format to choose, using the latest technology simply makes sense, but let's dig a bit deeper and explore the ways OpenType makes life easier for typographers and graphic designers.



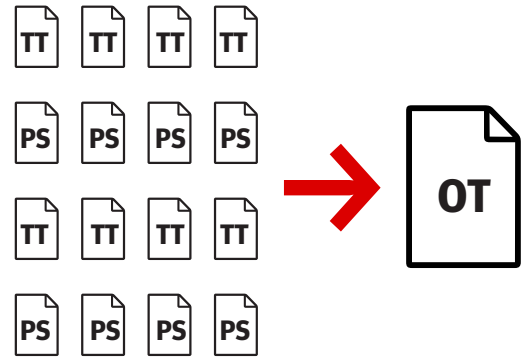
WHAT IS OPENTYPE?

One Style = One File

The PostScript format is limited to 256 characters per file. Metrics information and extra characters often need to be stored in additional files. This becomes especially unwieldy in a Windows PostScript font where a single typeface family can require hundreds of pieces.

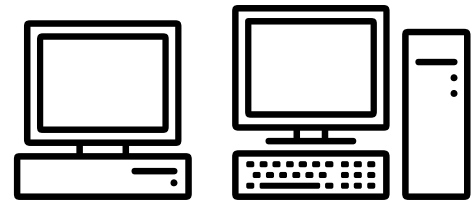
“Embrace the power of OpenType”

Based on Unicode, an OpenType file can contain up to 65,535 characters or glyphs. This allows for extensive language support and makes room for advanced typographic features like ligatures, various figure styles, fractions, stylistic alternates, swashes, small caps, ornaments, borders, and so on. All these extras can live in one file instead of many. A single OpenType file contains all the information required for a typeface style: metrics, kerning, outline, hints, and bitmaps.



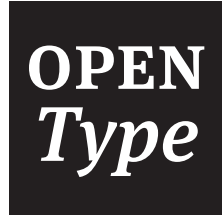
Mac and PC Compatible

Best of all, OpenType is a truly cross-platform format. You can use the same font on Mac or Windows machines without converting the font or fearing that reflow. Everywhere you use an OpenType font, it is the same typeface, same kerning, same line breaks.



OpenType is Powerful

OpenType fonts will work in nearly any application on any modern operating system, but when you use a truly OpenType savvy application the format's power is unlocked. Applications that support advanced OpenType features include Adobe InDesign CS, Illustrator CS, Photoshop CS, and newer versions of Quark XPress. These apps provide easy access to typographic features, so you can convert figures and lowercase to true small caps, all without changing the font. Many features kick in automatically, like ligature substitution. As these transformations are made, the raw text stays untouched. You can spellcheck or paste the text into other applications and the original copy's integrity is maintained.



WHAT IS OPENTYPE?

What's Inside?

Each OpenType font can include a variety of features. Some fonts have more extras and language support than others. Some foundries use the labels "Pro" and "Extra" to describe the feature-rich versions of their fonts. Unfortunately, there are no industry standards to define these terms, so we've made it easy to see what's included in any OpenType font by listing those goodies in the gray sidebar on Font Detail pages and showing corresponding glyphs in the Character Set viewer. Here are the most common OpenType features:

SMALL CAPS	abc ▶ ABC	FF SCALA BY FONTFONT
SMALL CAPS FROM CAPS	ABC ▶ ABC	SABON BY LINOTYPE
CASE-SENSITIVE FORMS	(C-SF) ▶ (C-SF)	MUSEO SANS BY EXLJBRIS
STANDARD LIGATURES	ffi ▶ ffi	TYCHO BY FOUNTAIN
DISCRETIONARY LIGATURES	st ▶ st	FF UNIT BY FONTFONT
LINING FIGURES	1234567890	FLEX BY BOLD MONDAY
OLDSTYLE FIGURES	1234567890	FLEX BY BOLD MONDAY
FRACTIONS	1/2 3/4	ALTO BY OURTYPE
ORNAMENTS		MAGNETA BY TYPETRUST



FontShop Education

FontShop is more than a shop that sells fonts — we want to help you do great work too. Get more typography tips and tutorials at fontshop.com/education.

About FontShop

Founded by Erik Spiekermann and Neville Brody in 1989, FontShop is the original independent retailer of digital type. We offer more than 100,000 fonts from dozens of expert-selected foundries, including our house brand: FontFont.

Colophon

This document is set in
FF Meta
FF Meta Serif
FF Dingbats 2.0

Further Reading

- [FontShop Fundamentals 2 Alternatives to Helvetica](#)
- [Erik Spiekermann's Typo Tips](#)
- [The Right Font for the Job](#)
- [Type Anatomy](#)

Online Resources

- FontShop.com
- FontFeed.com
- Spiekermann.com

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