Where do fonts come from, and why are there so many different formats? Some come loaded with your computer's operating system, while others are bundled with software packages. A few of these widely distributed typefaces are of the highest quality, such as Adobe Garamond Pro and **Hoefler Text**, while others (including **Comic Sans**, *Apple Chancery*, and ⟨ ⟩) are reviled by design snobs everywhere.

If you want to expand your vocabulary beyond this familiar fare, you will need to purchase fonts from digital type foundries. These range from large establishments like Adobe and FontShop, which license thousands of different typefaces, to independent producers that distribute just a few, such as Underware in the Netherlands or Jeremy Tankard Typography in the U.K. You can also learn to make your own fonts as well as find fonts that are distributed for free online.

The different font formats reflect technical innovations and business arrangements developed over time. Older font formats are still generally usable on modern operating systems.

POSTSCRIPT/TYPE 1 was developed for desktop computer systems in the 1980s by Adobe. Type 1 fonts are output using the PostScript programming language, created for generating high-resolution images on paper or film. A Type 1 font consists of two files: a screen font and a printer font. You must install both files in order to fully use these fonts.

TRUETYPE is a later font format, created by Apple and Microsoft for use with their operating systems. TrueType fonts are easier to install than Type 1 fonts because they consist of a single font file rather than two.

OPENTYPE, a format developed by Adobe, works on multiple platforms. Each file supports up to 65,000 characters, allowing multiple styles and character variations to be contained in a single font file. In a TrueType or Type 1 font, small capitals, alternate ligatures, and other special characters must be contained in separate font files (sometimes labelled "Expert"); in an OpenType font they are part of the main font. These expanded character sets can also include accented letters and other special glyphs needed for typesetting a variety of languages. OpenType fonts with expanded character sets are commonly labeled "Pro." OpenType fonts also automatically adjust the position of hyphens, brackets, and parentheses for letters set in all-capitals.

{[(HALF-BAKED?)]}

SCALA, *PostScript/Type 1 font format*

{[(HALF-BAKED?)]}

SCALA PRO, *OpenType font format*

£ § ¥ ¼ ½ ¾ É Ë Ì Å
Ã Â Á Ý Ø å ë ð ñ ò þ
ÿ Ą ą ě ę ġ ğ dž z ž ž
ő Ǵ Ġ ị ị ǐ † ☦ ☞ ☜

SCALA PRO, *OpenType font, designed by Martin Majoor, 2005. Scala Pro has numerous special characters for typesetting diverse European languages. You can access these characters using the Glyphs palette in InDesign.*

SMALL CAPS AND OLD-STYLE NUMERALS, WHERE ARE YOU HIDING?

NERD ALERT: Access small caps and numerals quickly through the Type>OpenType options menu or other OpenType layout tool in your design software. Small caps will not appear as a style variant in the Font menu, because OpenType treats them as part of the main font. With any font, you can view all the special characters through the Type and Tables>Glyphs menu. You will find many unexpected elements, including swashes, ligatures, ornaments, fractions, and more. Double click a glyph to insert it into to your text frame.

SAVE YOURSELF SOME EMBARRASSMENT AND LEARN TO USE THESE COMMONLY ABUSED TERMS CORRECTLY.

typeface or font?

A *typeface* is the design of the letterforms; a *font* is the delivery mechanism. In metal type, the design is embodied in the punches from which molds are made. A font consists of the cast metal printing types. In digital systems, the typeface is the visual design, while the font is the software that allows you to install, access, and output the design. A single typeface might be available in several font formats. In part because the design of digital typefaces and the production of fonts are so fluidly linked today, most people use the terms interchangeably. Type nerds insist, however, on using them precisely.

character or glyph?

Type designers distinguish *characters* from *glyphs* in order to comply with Unicode, an international system for identifying all of the world's recognized writing systems. Only a symbol with a unique function is considered a character and is thus assigned a code point in Unicode. A single character, such as a lowercase *a*, can be embodied by several different glyphs (a, *a*, ᴀ). Each glyph is a specific expression of a given character.

Roman or roman?

The Roman Empire is a proper noun and thus is capitalized, but we identify roman letterforms, like italic ones, in lowercase. The name of the Latin alphabet is capitalized.

Who is the user of a typeface? In the end, the user is the reader. But before a set of letters can find their way onto the cover of a book or the back of a cereal box, they must pass through the hands of another user: the graphic designer.

Digital fonts are easy to copy, alter, and distribute, but when you purchase a font, you accept an *end user license agreement* (EULA) that limits how you can use it. Intellectual property law in the United States protects the font as a piece of software (a unique set of vector points), but it does not protect the visual design of the typeface. Thus it is a violation of standard EULAs to copy a digital font and share it with other people (your friends, your clients, or your Uncle Bob). It is also illegal to open a font file in FontLab, add new glyphs or alter some of its characters, and save the font under a new name or under its trademarked name. In additon to having economic concerns, typeface designers worry about their work being corrupted as users edit their fonts and then share them with other people.

Most EULAs do allow you to alter the outlines of a font for use in a logo or headline, however, as long as you do not alter the software itself. It is also legal to create new digital versions of printed type specimens. For example, you could print out an alphabet in Helvetica, redraw the letters, digitize them with font design software, and release your own bespoke edition of Helvetica. If nothing else, this laborious exercise would teach you the value of a well-designed typeface. A broadly usable typeface includes numerous weights, styles, and special characters as well as a strong underlying design. Fonts are expensive because they are carefully crafted products.

FREE FONTS

Most of the FREE FONTS found on the Internet have poor spacing and incomplete character sets. Many are *stolen property* distributed without CONSENT. The fonts displayed here, however, are freely given by their creators. A typeface comes to life and finds a voice as people begin to use it.

FONTIN, *designed by Jos Buivenga/Ex Ljbris, 2004*

DESIGNERS have long sought to CONTROL the behavior of users, clients, manufacturers, retailers, and the press. How will a work be interpreted? Will it survive over time in its DESIRED STATE of completion? An architect succeeds when the occupants of his house behave ACCORDING TO PLAN. The rise of online tools has challenged designers' sense of CONTROL in every discipline: the user has become a designer.

AUDIMAT, *designed by Jack Usine/SMeltery.net, 2003*

Some fonts are *distributed freely* in order to preserve UNFAMILIAR traditions. Disseminating a historic revival at no cost to users encourages a broader understanding of history. Reviving typefaces is a DEEP-ROOTED practice. Why should one creator *claim ownership* of another's work? Who controls the past?

ANTYKWA POLTAWSKIEGO, *designed by Adam Półtawski, 1920s–1930s; digitized by Janusz Marian Nowacki, 1996*

SOME FREE FONTS are produced for *underserved linguistic communities* for whom few typefaces are available. Still others are created by people who want to participate in the *open source movement*. The OFL (Open Font License) permits users to alter a typeface and contribute to its ongoing evolution.

GENTIUM *Open Font License, designed by Victor Gaultney, 2001*

TO PARTICIPATE IN a viable, diverse *ecology of content* (journalism, design, art, typography, and more), *everyone has to pay*. BUT PERHAPS everyone shouldn't have to *pay for everything*. If some resources are willingly given away, the result is a RICHER WORLD.

OFL SORTS MILL GOUDY, *revival of Frederic W. Goudy's Goudy Old Style, 1916, designed by Barry Schwartz, 2010; distributed by the League of Moveable Type*

EVERY OBJECT IN THE WORLD CAN PASS FROM A

LEAGUE GOTHIC, *designed by the League of Moveable Type, 2009; revival of Morris Fuller Benton's*

CLOSED, SILENT EXISTENCE TO AN ORAL STATE,

ALTERNATE GOTHIC NO.I., *released by American Type Founders Company (ATF) in 1903.*

OPEN TO APPROPRIATION BY SOCIETY, FOR THERE

DOWNCOME, *designed by Eduardo Recife/ Misprinted Type, 2002*

IS NO LAW, WHETHER NATURAL OR NOT, WHICH

FORBIDS TALKING ABOUT THINGS. A TREE IS A

SHORTCUT, *designed by Eduardo Recife, 2003*

TREE. YES, OF COURSE. BUT A TREE AS EXPRESSED BY

Minou Drouet was a French child poet and composer widely derided by intellectuals in the 1950s.

MINOU DROUET IS NO LONGER QUITE A TREE, IT IS A

DIRTY EGO, *designed by Eduardo Recife, 2001*

TREE WHICH IS DECORATED, ADAPTED TO A CERTAIN

TYPE OF CONSUMPTION, LADEN WITH LITERARY SELF-

MISPROJECT, *designed by Eduardo Recife, 2001*

INDULGENCE, REVOLT, IMAGES, IN SHORT WITH A TYPE

OF SOCIAL USAGE WHICH IS ADDED TO PURE MATTER.

TEXT: *Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," 1957; translated by Annette Lavers.*