Die Grotesk

Hairline 100 *Hairline Italic* 100

Thin 200 *Thin Italic* 200

Light 300 *Light Italic* 300

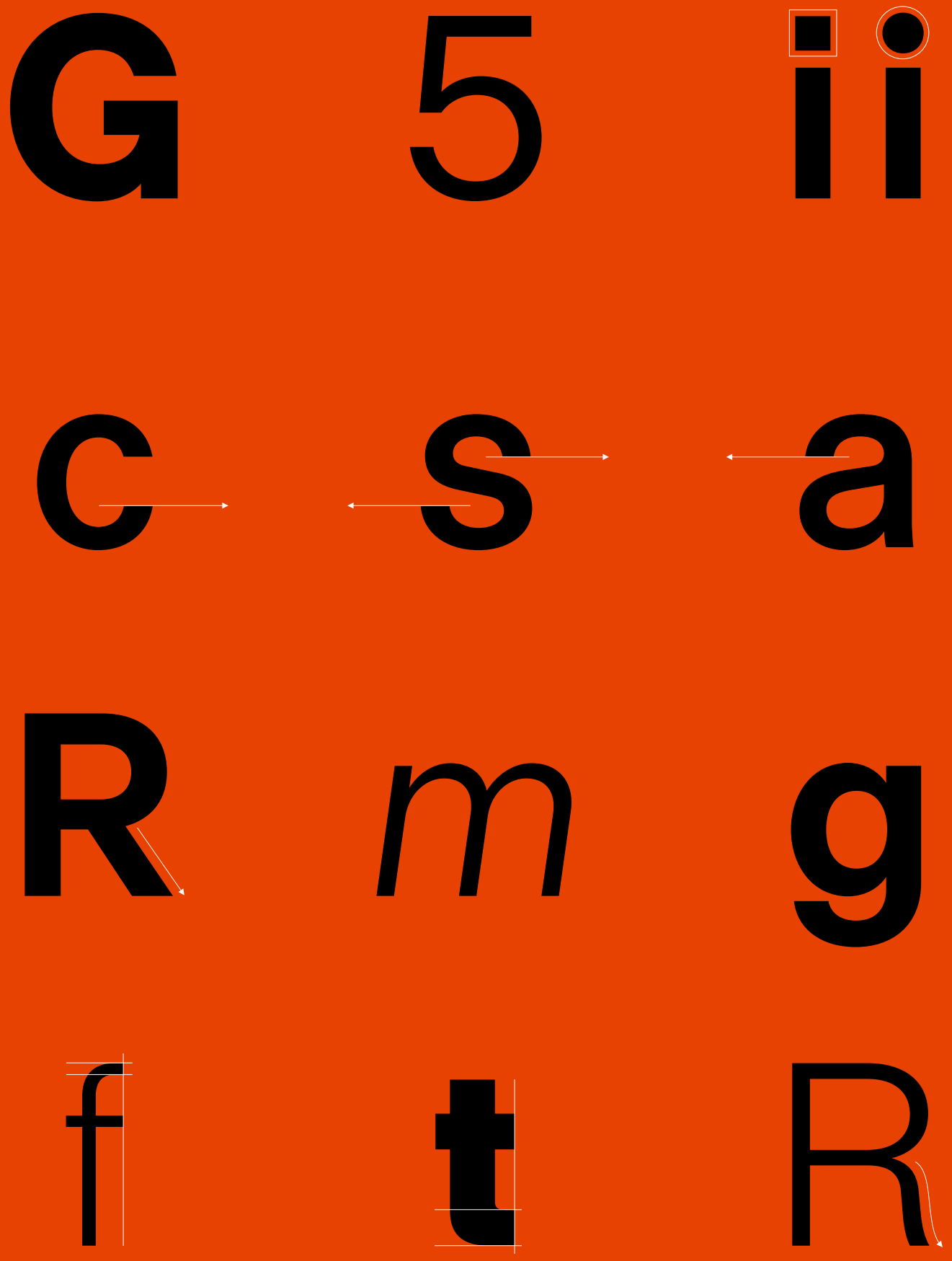
Regular 400 *Italic* 400

Medium 500 ***Medium Italic*** 500

Bold 700 ***Bold Italic*** 700

Black 800 ***Black Italic*** 800

Heavy 900 ***Heavy Italic*** 900


G 5 ii
c s a
R m g
f t R

Die Grotesk has 4 optical subfamilies:

Die Grotesk A	6–18pt	10–30px
Die Grotesk B	18–30pt	30–60px
Die Grotesk C	30–42pt	60–90px
Die Grotesk D	42pt +	90px +

Die Grotesk's spacing functions optimally at all sizes. At small sizes the spacing is generous, allowing for comfortable reading. At large sizes the spacing is tight, referencing the hand-spaced methods of the modernist masters.

172pt Hairline Opsz 42 Wght 100

Universal

172pt Thin Alt R Opsz 42 Wght 200

Realising

172pt Light Opsz 42 Wght 300

Celebes

172pt Regular Round dots Opsz 42 Wght 400

Schädel

172pt Medium Opsz 42 Wght 500

Adages

172pt Bold Round dots Opsz 42 Wght 600

Circular

172pt Black Opsz 42 Wght 700

Uiterlijk

172pt Heavy Opsz 42 Wght 800

Einsatz

172pt Hairline Italic Round dots Opsz 42 Wght 100

Christelijk

172pt Thin Italic Opsz 42 Wght 200

Dubbing

172pt Light Italic Opsz 42 Wght 300

Problem

172pt Regular Italic Opsz 42 Wght 400

Subtlest

172pt Medium Italic Opsz 42 Wght 500

Realism

172pt Bold Italic Opsz 42 Wght 600

Gruppe

172pt Black Italic Opsz 42 Wght 700

Skeptic

172pt Heavy Italic Opsz 42 Wght 800

Zilches

80pt Hairline Opsz 42 Wght 100

Chromolithography

80pt Thin Opsz 42 Wght 200

Designhochschule

80pt Light Opsz 42 Wght 300

Electrocardiogram

80pt Regular Opsz 42 Wght 400

Wetenschappelijk

80pt Medium Opsz 42 Wght 100

Psychotherapists

80pt Bold Round dots Opsz 42 Wght 200

Homogenisation

80pt Black Opsz 42 Wght 300

Photosensitised

80pt Heavy Opsz 42 Wght 400

Studiemateriaal

80pt Hairline Italic Opsz 42 Wght 100

Contemporaneous

80pt Thin Italic Opsz 42 Wght 200

Außergewöhnliche

80pt Light Italic Round dots Opsz 42 Wght 300

Nobelpreisträgerin

80pt Regular Italic Opsz 42 Wght 400

Counterbalancing

80pt Medium Italic Opsz 42 Wght 100

Whippersnapper

80pt Bold Italic Opsz 42 Wght 200

Demythologized

80pt Black Italic Alt R Opsz 42 Wght 300

Reinterpretation

80pt Heavy Italic Opsz 42 Wght 400

Chocolademelk

30pt Hairline Opsz 30 Wght 100

For a brief moment, we thought it would be post-modernism and print forever. We'd finally smash the grid. We'd all be poetic art-designers making free-wheeling typography that defied clear meaning, slipping through the subconscious like an eel. We were going to make graphic design like David Lynch made films.

30pt Thin Opsz 30 Wght 200

Scrolling on my black mirror two decades later I'm told Lynch has died. While reflecting on his sublime normcore weirdness, a feed vomited up an infuriating article about some AI music CEO mewling, "the majority of people don't enjoy the majority of the time they spend making music".

30pt Light Opsz 30 Wght 300

I texted the article to my good mate Duncan, who replied: "Don't bother getting good at something. Yeah, sounds like another AI grift."

30pt Regular Opsz 30 Wght 400

Now, Duncan is a very good designer. He spent a long time getting good. In the late 2000s, he made excellent typography with Helvetica. Meanwhile, I was fumbling about with béziers in FontLab, desperately convincing myself Helvetica isn’t good.

30pt Medium Round dots Opsz 30 Wght 500

Convincing myself that it was, in fact, terrible. It stood for everything wrong with typographic legibility and readability. In my belief, I staked a whole typeface standing against Helvetica, on being everything that it isn’t. When you’re cutting your teeth you have to hone your knife against something.

30pt Bold Opsz 30 Wght 700

I don’t know exactly when I started to appreciate Helvetica. I really like making typefaces. I get enormous satisfaction out of the process. I enjoy the time it takes. But that’s only really part of it. The fulfilling aspect is seeing my fonts actually being used.

30pt Black Opsz 30 Wght 800

I don’t know why many type designers publicly dislike Helvetica. Maybe it’s like musicians hating The Beatles or chefs expressing disgust at McDonald’s. When you’re in the game, working in the shadow of a decades-old beast is daunting.

30pt Heavy Opsz 30 Wght 900

That sort of typeface is intimidating. It’s not the peak of our craft but it’s damn close. Helvetica’s power is its symbiotic relationship with modernism, corporate identity, graphic design, and relative ease of use. It just looks good. Masters like Massimo Vignelli provided archetypes and methods of constructing words and logos that remain attractive and authoritative.

18pt Hairline Opsz 18 Wght 100

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18pt Thin Opsz 18 Wght 200

Die Grotesk is Klim's first public variable font. We've made VF's for a couple other clients. Now that we've moved our production and engineering process to GitHub, fontmake, and Designspace, they're a bit easier to make. I was skeptical of VFs during their 2016 public announcement at ATypI in Warsaw. I remain skeptical as they're still extremely brittle and relatively poorly supported. The functional use-case is reasonable — i.e., saving a bit of space or bandwidth or whatever for websites. I appreciate the efforts of developers who derive great satisfaction from trimming the digital fat and optimising their sites. It's craft. But I'm not making fonts as interim stopgaps until actual solutions arrive. I'm making fonts for designers to use and enjoy.

18pt Light Opsz 18 Wght 300

From my observations, designers get enormous pleasure locking up logos and headlines *just so*. Die Grotesk makes that easier, more predictable, and consistent. Like the original metal cuts of Neue Haas Grotesk, Die Grotesk is designed for perfect typographic texture across all sizes. To this end, Die Grotesk has a slider that controls the letter spacing. It's technically the Optical Size axis (opsz). The larger the letters need to be, the bigger the number on the slider. The slider scale indicates intended *point size:* 6 = 6pt, 42 = 42pt. With any luck this will save designers mucking about with negative tracking values, which is a crude way of getting tight spacing and rarely reflects the desired finish in a lockup.

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Channelling Vignelli, I spaced and kerned Die Grotesk D cuts for headlines and logotypes, perfecting each letter combination for one or two words rather than blocks of continuous text. Helvetica was canonised through large size use: headlines, logos, poster typography, etc. Conspicuously absent is small text settings. Back in the old days of hand-set metal type, Helvetica's text sizes were wonderful. It's hard to appreciate text typesetting in a reproduction. Display typography is performative — it's easier to convey through reproductions.

18pt Medium Opsz 18 Wght 500

Text typography has different functional remit. It needs to be experienced at a one-to-one scale. This is what my old anti-Helvetica sentiment misses. It was predicated on digital font text setting. My prejudice lingered until I got actual Haas specimens with 8, 9, 10 pt text settings. It suddenly dawned on me how fucking good it actually is. The grey value of the texture is solid and sublime. This is what I've tried to capture in Die Grotesk's A cuts — functional and sympathetic spacing for small text sizes.

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Helvetica is endearing and infuriating because it's simultaneously banal and sublime. Its plain letterforms, now, seem so obvious. It's hard to imagine what could be added or subtracted to make it better. Helvetica came about through painstaking skill and craft and observation. Unlike AI prompting, it took a long time to make. Max Miedinger was a graphic artist and font salesman for Haas. He knew what designers were buying and using. His keen eye, coupled with Eduard Hoffmann's good timing made all the difference.

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9pt Thin Opsz 9 Wght 200

For a brief moment, we thought it would be post-modernism and print forever. We'd finally smash the grid. We'd all be poetic art-designers making free-wheeling typography that defied clear meaning, slipping through the subconscious like an eel. We were going to make graphic design like David Lynch made films. Scrolling on my black mirror two decades later I'm told Lynch has died. While reflecting on his sublime normcore weirdness, a feed vomited up an infuriating article about some AI music CEO mewling, "the majority of people don't enjoy the majority of the time they spend making music". I texted the article to my good mate Duncan, who replied, "Don't bother getting good at something. Yeah, sounds like another AI grift." Now, Duncan is a very good designer. He spent a long time getting good. In the late 2000s, he made excellent typography with Helvetica. Meanwhile, I was fumbling about with béziers in FontLab, desperately convincing myself Helvetica isn't good. Convincing myself that it was, in fact, terrible. It stood for everything wrong with typographic legibility and readability. At least that's what all the dudes on typophile.com said over and over ad infinitum across hundreds of threads. In my belief, I staked a whole typeface standing against Helvetica, on being everything that it isn't. When you're cutting your teeth you have to hone your knife against something. I don't know exactly when I started to appreciate Helvetica. I really like making typefaces. I get enormous satisfaction out of the process. I enjoy the time it takes. But that's only really part of it. The fulfilling aspect is seeing my fonts actually being used. My fonts feel useless if they sit unused. The life cycle of a font is only complete when it is put to use. If I paid attention and didn't have such silly, strong opinions about Helvetica, I would have understood how and why designers like Duncan were using Helvetica. Instead I flirted with it making Calibre, Untitled Sans, and Söhne. I even slipped Helvetica's weight and spacing into Founders Grotesk. Which turned out alright in the end — it's still one of my bestsellers 12 years later. I don't know why many type designers publicly dislike Helvetica. Maybe it's like musicians hating The Beatles or chefs expressing disgust at McDonald's. When you're in the game, working in the shadow of a decades-old beast is daunting. Something so big, so popular, something so desirable people actually pay good money for it. Something so fucking good it becomes the air that surrounds us. That sort of typeface is intimidating. It's not the peak of our craft but it's damn close. Helvetica's power is its symbiotic relationship with modernism, corporate identity, graphic design, and relative ease of use. It just looks good. Masters like Massimo Vignelli provided archetypes and methods of constructing words and logos that remain attractive and authoritative. He understood the graphic power of tight-but-not-touching spacing. He sliced those sidebearings until the words seemed inevitable and effortless. It takes a lot of time and experience to have that aesthetic judgment, especially with the tools and materials he used. Die Grotesk is Klim's first public variable font. We've made VF's for a couple other clients. Now that we've moved our production and engineering process to GitHub, fontmake, and Designspace, they're a bit easier to make. I was skeptical of VFs during their 2016 public announcement at ATypI in Warsaw. I remain skeptical as they're still extremely brittle and relatively poorly supported. The functional use-case is reasonable — i.e., saving a bit of space or bandwidth or whatever for websites.[2] I appreciate the efforts of developers who derive great satisfaction from trimming the digital fat and optimising their sites. It's craft. But I'm not making fonts as interim stopgaps until actual solutions arrive. I'm making fonts for designers to use and enjoy. However… subsetting a webfont to save 4kb, then serving 2mb unoptimised .png and 10mb of track-

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9pt Regular Opsz 9 Wght 400

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9pt Medium Opsz 9 Wght 500

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9pt Bold Opsz 9 Wght 700

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9pt Black Opsz 9 Wght 800

Apart from being the best decade for metal, the 90s was a time when artists — specifically musicians — struggled with and pushed back against rampant exploitation, commercialisation and corporatisation. These were my teenage years, a defining time for any young person. The prevailing sentiment seemed so plain and obvious: fuck the man, don't sell out. Make your own shit, control the distribution. I just assumed these were the fundamental tenets of running a creative practice. To 'sell out' was the worst thing you could do. But it wasn't clear what 'selling out' actually meant, and certainly didn't leave any nuance or grey area on the spectrum between creative integrity and moral bankruptcy. During an extended kōrerorero with my mate Reuben, we reminisced about the differences between the 90s and now. He reckons selling out as hard and fast as possible is the name of the game these days. Make something, get famous, get money. Move fast, break things. Rinse and repeat. If making money is the only goal, just be honest and get into crypto[8] or real estate or whatever. Maybe that's what fuelled the creative/money/sellout tension of the 90s. Does financial success from pursuing a creative practice erode integrity, resulting in a de facto selling out? This has become standard Silicon Valley practice. My first direct encounter was TypeKit in 2010. They wanted Klim to join but something felt off, so I declined. Sure enough, a year later they flicked it off to Adobe. Within the type design world, making anything like Helvetica (or even a neo-grotesk) lacks integrity and feels like selling out. Because it's so popular, so known, even making something close is creative bankruptcy. You've run out of ideas and are just trying to make money. Your greasy fingers are desperately grasping at something established because it's the easy option. And, by Christ, we should make fonts the hard way. Just like Garamond did. Many modern type foundries have a sense of craft and tradition. We're mindful of our history, collectively bearing the weight of tradition. We see ourselves as collegial, but independent, craftspeople. We're not like musicians in a particular genre, all happy to to be labelled punk and playing sets in dive bars. Foundries rarely work exclusively within a single genre. No foundry, for example, dedicates themselves to making only humanist sans serifs or 18th century blackletter revivals. We're like record labels, expected to have a catalogue. We're extreme specialists, modern artisans, crafting original fonts across multiple genres, supporting multiple scripts, using the latest technology, ensuring our fonts work seamlessly across 30 years of digital platforms, apps, software environments, and operating systems, all while running our own 24/7 sales and marketing and support and — for fuck's sake — never selling out. These days it's Monotype, a handful of resellers, and a few hundred small foundries selling fonts. In 90s terminology, Monotype is 'the man'. They own so much, including the once-indie darlings FontShop, MyFonts and Hoefler&Co. Making fonts is hard enough. Most of us are good at the making part but struggle with graphic design, distribution, licensing, and marketing. The craft world in general struggles with the idea of selling and selling out — surely the quality of the work should be be enough? Surely, but no. That's not how it works. I guess it's more accurate to say Monotype's parent company HGGC own all the fonts. Monotype is also $1.45B in the hole and aggressively

6pt Light Opsz 6 Wght 300

For a brief moment, we thought it would be post-modernism and print forever. We'd finally smash the grid. We'd all be poetic art-designers making free-wheeling typography that defied clear meaning, slipping through the subconscious like an eel. We were going to make graphic design like David Lynch made films. Scrolling on my black mirror two decades later I'm told Lynch has died. While reflecting on his sublime normcore weirdness, a feed vomited up an infuriating article about some AI music CEO mewling, "the majority of people don't enjoy the majority of the time they spend making music". I texted the article to my good mate Duncan, who replied, "Don't bother getting good at something. Yeah, sounds like another AI grift." Now, Duncan is a very good designer. He spent a long time getting good. In the late 2000s, he made excellent typography with Helvetica. Meanwhile, I was fumbling about with béziers in FontLab, desperately convincing myself Helvetica isn't good. Convincing myself that it was, in fact, terrible. It stood for everything wrong with typographic legibility and readability. At least that's what all the dudes on typophile.com said over and over ad infinitum across hundreds of threads. In my belief, I staked a whole typeface standing against Helvetica, on being everything that it isn't. When you're cutting your teeth you have to hone your knife against something. I don't know exactly when I started to appreciate Helvetica. I really like making typefaces. I get enormous satisfaction out of the process. I enjoy the time it takes. But that's only really part of it. The fulfilling aspect is seeing my fonts actually being used. My fonts feel useless if they sit unused. The life cycle of a font is only complete when it is put to use. If I paid attention and didn't have such silly, strong opinions about Helvetica, I would have understood how and why designers like Duncan were using Helvetica. Instead I flirted with it making Calibre, Untitled Sans, and Söhne. I even slipped Helvetica's weight and spacing into Founders Grotesk. Which turned out alright in the end — it's still one of my bestsellers 12 years later. I don't know why many type designers publicly dislike Helvetica. Maybe it's like musicians hating The Beatles or chefs expressing disgust at McDonald's. When you're in the game, working in the shadow of a decades-old beast is daunting. Something so big, so popular, something so desirable people actually pay good money for it. Something so fucking good it becomes the air that surrounds us. That sort of typeface is intimidating. It's not the peak of our craft but it's damn close. Helvetica's power is its symbiotic relationship with modernism, corporate identity, graphic design, and relative ease of use. It just looks good. Masters like Massimo Vignelli provided archetypes and methods of constructing words and logos that remain attractive and authoritative. He understood the graphic power of tight-but-not-touching spacing. He sliced those sidebearings until the words seemed inevitable and effortless. It takes a lot of time and experience to have that aesthetic judgment, especially with the tools and materials he used. Die Grotesk is Klim's first public variable font. We've made VF's for a couple other clients. Now that we've moved our production and engineering process to GitHub, fontmake, and Designspace, they're a bit easier to make. I was skeptical of VFs during their 2016 public announcement at ATypI in Warsaw. I remain skeptical as they're still extremely brittle and relatively poorly supported. The functional use-case is reasonable — i.e., saving a bit of space or bandwidth or whatever for websites.[2] I appreciate the efforts of developers who derive great satisfaction from trimming the digital fat and optimising their sites. It's craft. But I'm not making fonts as interim stopgaps until actual solutions arrive. 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6pt Regular Opsz 6 Wght 400

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6pt Medium Opsz 6 Wght 500

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6pt Bold Opsz 6 Wght 700

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The whole place could have existed verbatim in my childhood and will probably remain so for the next decade. Our three scoops, two fish, and one burger went down a treat. When I was a kid, greasies were wrapped in the newspaper. Not anymore. Our chips didn't taste the same wrapped in newsprint. I felt the quiet nostalgic typographic loss. Nostalgia is a powerful emotional force. Recently I've been rediscovering 90s music. Apart from being the best decade for metal, the 90s was a time when artists — specifically musicians — struggled with and pushed back against rampant exploitation, commercialisation and corporatisation. These were my teenage years, a defining time for any young person. The prevailing sentiment seemed so plain and obvious: fuck the man, don't sell out. Make your own shit, control the distribution. I just assumed these were the fundamental tenets of running a creative practice. To 'sell out' was the worst thing you could do. But it wasn't clear what 'selling out' actually meant, and certainly didn't leave any nuance or grey area on the spectrum between creative integrity and moral bankruptcy. During an extended kōrerorero with my mate Reuben, we reminisced about the differences between the 90s and now. He reckons selling out as hard and fast as possible is the name of the game these days. Make something, get famous, get money. Move fast, break things. Rinse and repeat. If making money is the only goal, just be honest and get into crypto[6] or real estate or whatever. Maybe that's what fuelled the creative/money/sellout tension of the 90s. Does financial success from pursuing a creative practice erode integrity, resulting in a de facto selling out? This has become standard Silicon Valley practice. My first direct encounter was TypeKit in 2010. They wanted Klim to join but something felt off, so I declined. Sure enough, a year later they flicked it off to Adobe. Within the type design world, making anything like Helvetica (or even a neo-grotesk) lacks integrity and feels like selling out. Because it's so popular, so known, even making something close is creative bankruptcy. You've run out of ideas and are just trying to make money. Your greasy fingers are desperately grasping at something established because it's the easy option. And, by Christ, we should make fonts the hard way. Just like Garamond did. Many modern type foundries have a sense of craft and tradition. We're mindful of our history, collectively bearing the weight of tradition. We see ourselves as collegial, but independent, craftspeople. We're not like musicians in a particular genre, all happy to to be labelled punk and playing sets in dive bars. Foundries rarely work exclusively within a single genre. No foundry, for example, dedicates themselves to making only humanist sans serifs or 18th century blackletter revivals. We're like record labels, expected to have a catalogue. We're extreme specialists, modern artisans, crafting original fonts across multiple genres, supporting multiple scripts, using the latest technology, ensuring our fonts work seamlessly across 30 years of digital platforms, apps, software environments, and operating systems, all while running our own 24/7 sales and marketing and support and — for fuck's sake — never selling out. These days it's Monotype, a handful of resellers, and a few hundred small foundries selling fonts. In 90s terminology, Monotype is 'the man'. They own so much, including the once-indie darlings FontShop, MyFonts and Hoefler&Co. Making fonts is hard enough. Most of us are good at the making part but struggle with graphic design, distribution, licensing, and marketing. The craft world in general struggles with the idea of selling and selling out — surely the quality of the work should be be enough? Surely, but no. That's not how it works. I guess it's more accurate to say Monotype's parent company HGGC own all the fonts. Monotype is also $1.45B in the hole and aggressively shake down small studios and corporate customers alike for inflated licensing deals to pay it off. Domination and ubiquity are therefore to be encouraged. We should readjust our values because in the web-based world we are told that monopoly is good for us. The major record labels usually siphon off most of this income, and then they dribble about 15-20% of what's left down to their artists. MyFonts used to be an excellent platform for type designers to sell their fonts. The royalty rate was 80% in favour of the designer. Now it's 20% if you're lucky and you're thrown in with a quarter of a million competing fonts being promoted by God-knows-what shady algorithm driven by opaque C-suite imperatives and subject to shitty terms and conditions. Ages ago, a MyFonts guy said I should join because the customer base was huge and sales were great. I declined. Back then, I

OpenType features

Round dots

ss01

Transforms all square dots to round forms, including accents and punctuation.

Alternate R

ss02

Alternate R with a curved leg.

Slashed zero

zero

Slashed zero differentiates the zero from an upper or lowercase o as clearly as possible.

Ordinals

ordn

Ordinals are Opszly adjusted, small, raised lowercase letters. You can use them for numerical abbreviations like 1st, 2nd, 3rd and in languages like French for 1e or

Fractions

frac

Dynamic fractions will automatically substitute for pre-built and arbitrary fractions.

Case-sensitive forms

case

Punctuation designed specifically to align with capital letters.

Contextual alternates

calt

Alternate that intelligently substitutes depending on context. The multiplication sign will only substitue x or X for × between numerals.

OpenType features

Subscript

subs

H_2O C_2H_6O

Subscripts & Inferiors are Opszly adjusted, small lowered numerals. They usually sit below the baseline. You can use them for chemical formulae, like H_20.

Superscript

sups

Footnotes.[5]

Superscripts are Opszly adjusted, small raised numerals. You can use them for footnote references in running text,[1] chemistry notation (^2H) and mathematical exponents (x^3).

Tabular lining numerals

tnum

0123456789

Tabular lining numerals all share the same width. You can use them to align columns of data or a price list, for example. The associated currency and math symbols also have the same width.

Character set

Uppercase

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Uppercase alternates

RŔŘŖ

Lowercase

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Uppercase accents

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ÍJ́ĴĴĶĹĽĻĿŁŃŇŅÑŊÓŎÔỐỘỒỔỖÖỌÒỎƠỚỢ
ỜỞỠŐŌØǾÕŒŔŘŖŚŠŞŜȘẞŦŤŢȚÞÚŬÛÜỤÙ
ỦƯỨỰỪỬỮŰŪŲŮŨẂŴẀẄÝŶŸỴỲỶỸŹŽŻ

Lowercase accents

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Round dot alternates

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Character set

Numerals

00123456789

Tabular numerals

00123456789

Currency & math

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Tabular currency & math

$¢£€¥฿₫₣₦₱₱₽₹₺₩ƒ +−=÷×<> #%

Superscript, denominator & subscript

0123456789 0123456789 0123456789

Ordinals

a̲o̲ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Punctuation & symbols

&@ ()[]{} /|\ ¿?¡! •·-–—~_ .,:;…
'"‘“’”„ «»‹› °^*†‡§¶©®™

Punctuation & symbol capital forms

@ ()[]{} /|\ •·-–— «»‹› ¿?¡!

Prebuilt fractions

½ ¼ ¾ ⅓ ⅔ ⅛ ⅜ ⅝ ⅞

Arrows

↑↓←→↖↗↘↙↕↔