

“The life of a designer is a life of fight.
Fight against the ugliness.”

-Massimo Vignelli

the basics of
type anatomy

Letters sit on this line.

baseline

Baseline: *the imaginary line upon which a line of text rests*

midline
baseline

x-height { main portion of lowercase letter

x a n

x-height: *the distance between the baseline and the top of the main portion of a lower case form (originally based on the lowercase x).*

midline
baseline

x-height { main portion of lowercase letter

midline - - - x Apple - - - x Apple
Mrs. Eaves Garamond

*note: the **midline** (or **mean line**) is the between the baseline and cap height. The **midline** and **x-height** may or may not be the same size, this depends on the typeface.*

cap height

baseline

Height of Capital Letters

H

Capital Letters: *formerly called **majuscule** letters, are uppercase letters originally stored in upper drawers or “upper cases” in print shops.*

ascender height
cap height
midline
baseline

Descenders dip below baseline
descender height

j p }

Decenders: *the portion of a lowercase letter that extends below the baseline.*

ascender height
cap height
midline
baseline

Height of Ascenders

d

Ascenders: *a part of a letter that extends above the main portion of the lowercase form*

serif vs. sans serif

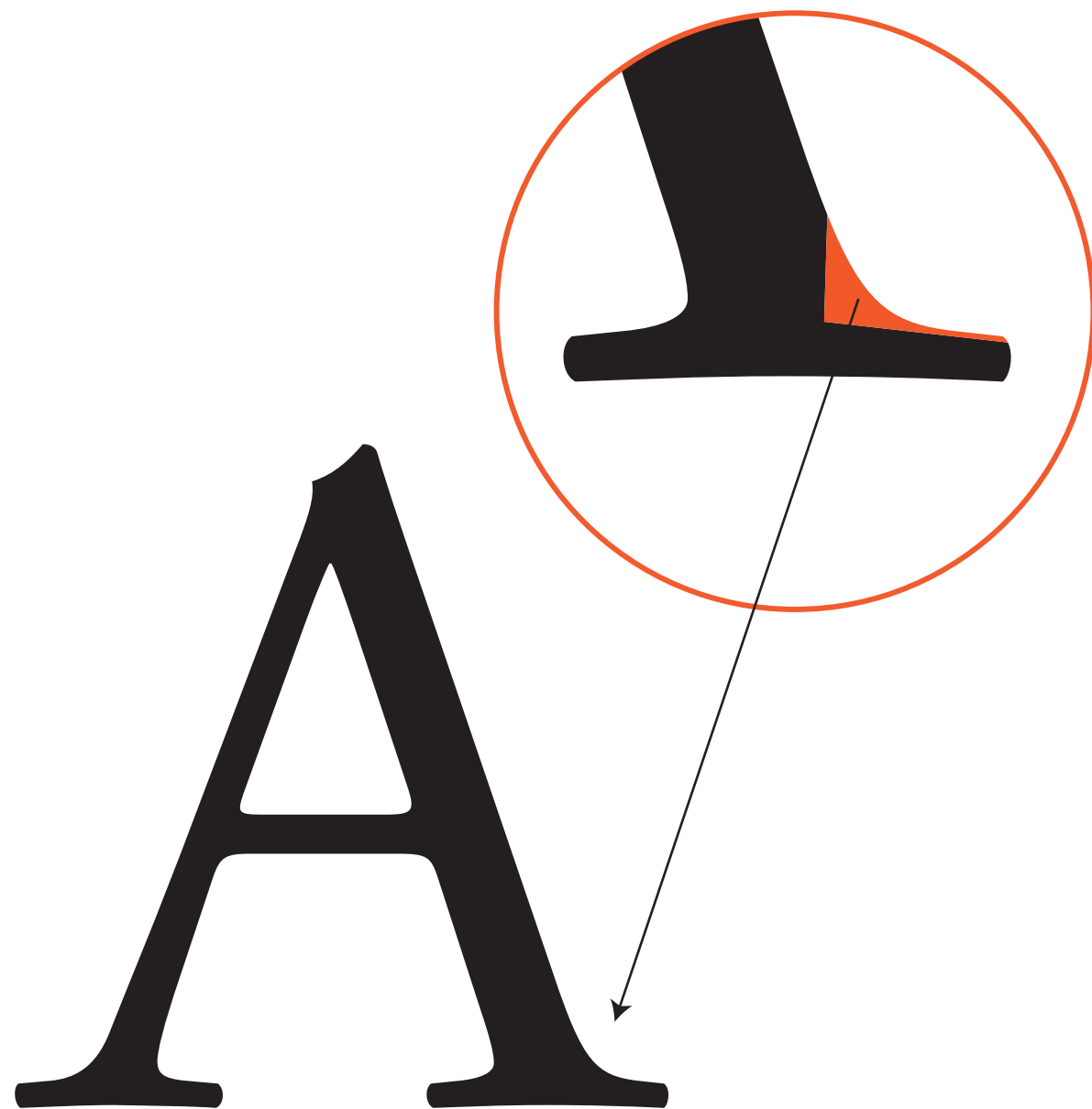


serif

a stroke stemming off main stems of a letterform

sans serif

without serif



bracketed serifs

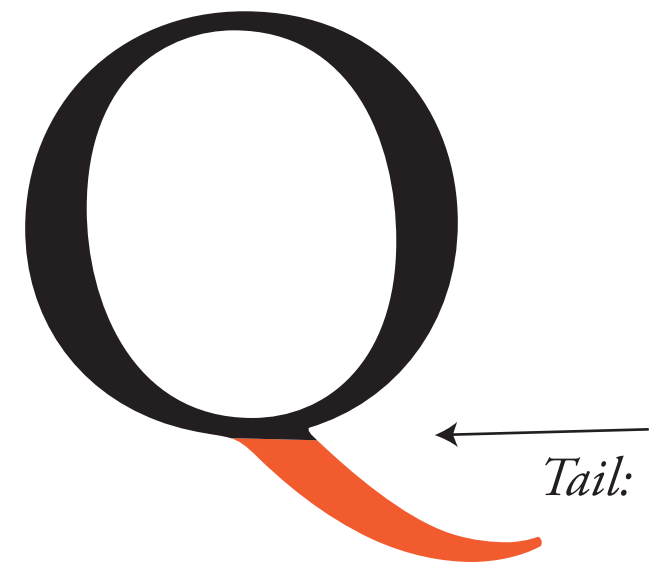
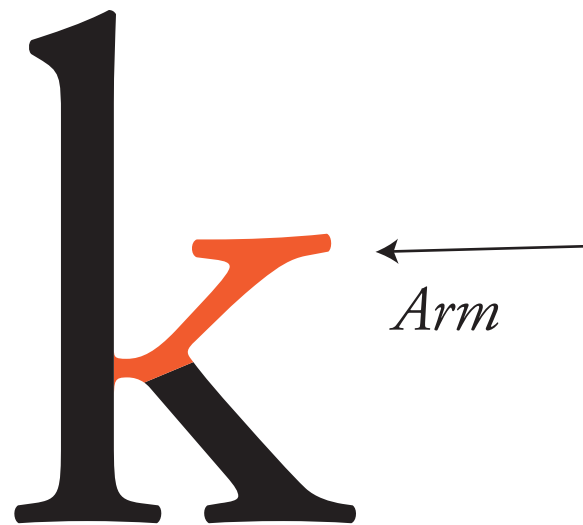
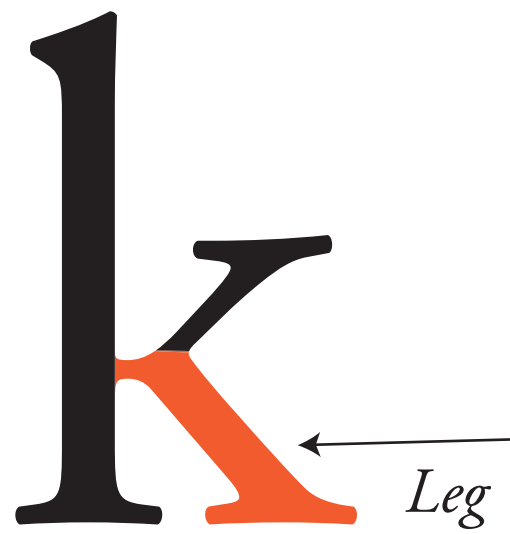
A curved or wedge-like connection between the stem and serif of some fonts.



slab serifs & unbracketed serifs

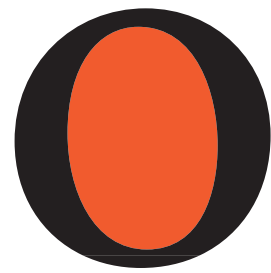
attach directly to the strokes of the letterform, sometimes abruptly or at right angles.

parts of the letter (think animal anatomy!)

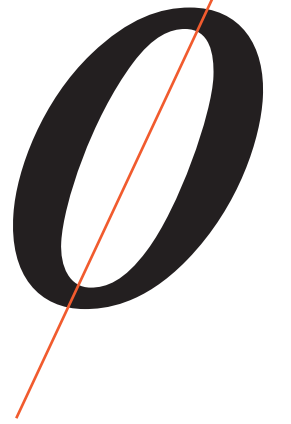
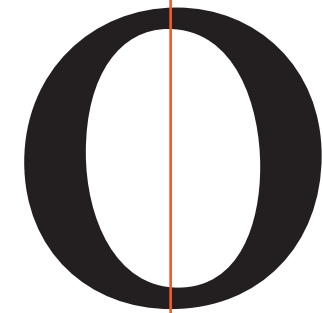




Stem



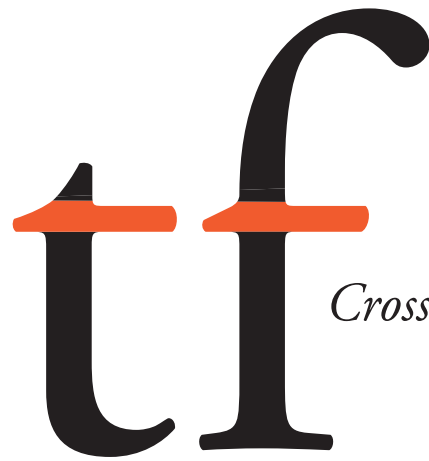
Counter



stress



Crossbar



Crosstroke



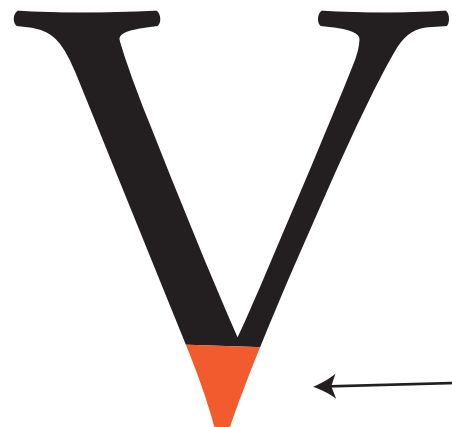
link



loop



Apex:

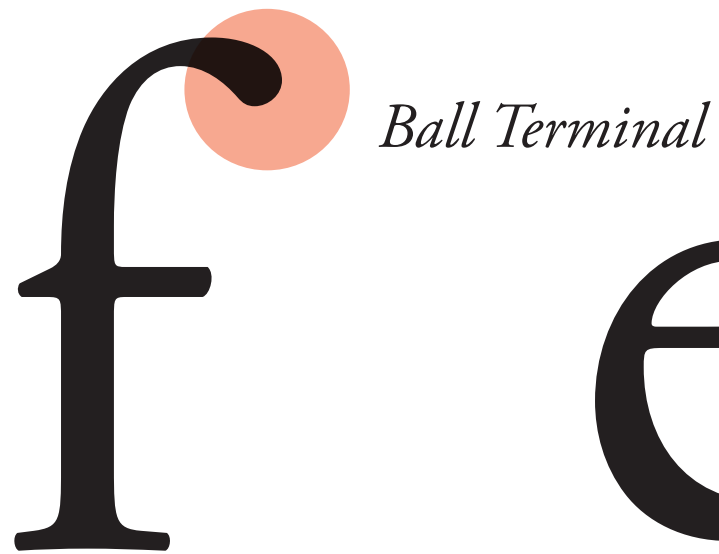


Vertex:



bowl

end strokes & decorative strokes



ligatures

f f f f f f f f

f f f f f f f f

spacing

M

Em space

N

En space

Em dash



En dash



hyphen



uppercase numerals

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

uppercase letters

A B C D E F G H I J K

lowercase numerals

(non-lining or old-style numerals)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

small capitals letters

A B C D E F G H I J K

type measurements

type sizes are measured in **points (pts)**

the distance from the baseline of one line to type to the next is called **leading**, in reference to the strips of lead used to separate lines of metal type.

leading is measured from
{ baseline to baseline

type measurements

1 inch = 6 picas = 72 points

1 pica = 12 points

type notations:

6 picas is written: **6p or 6p0**

6 picas 7 points is written: **6p7**

7 points is written **7 pts., 0p7 or p7**

10 point Universe with 2 point leading is written:
10/12 Univers