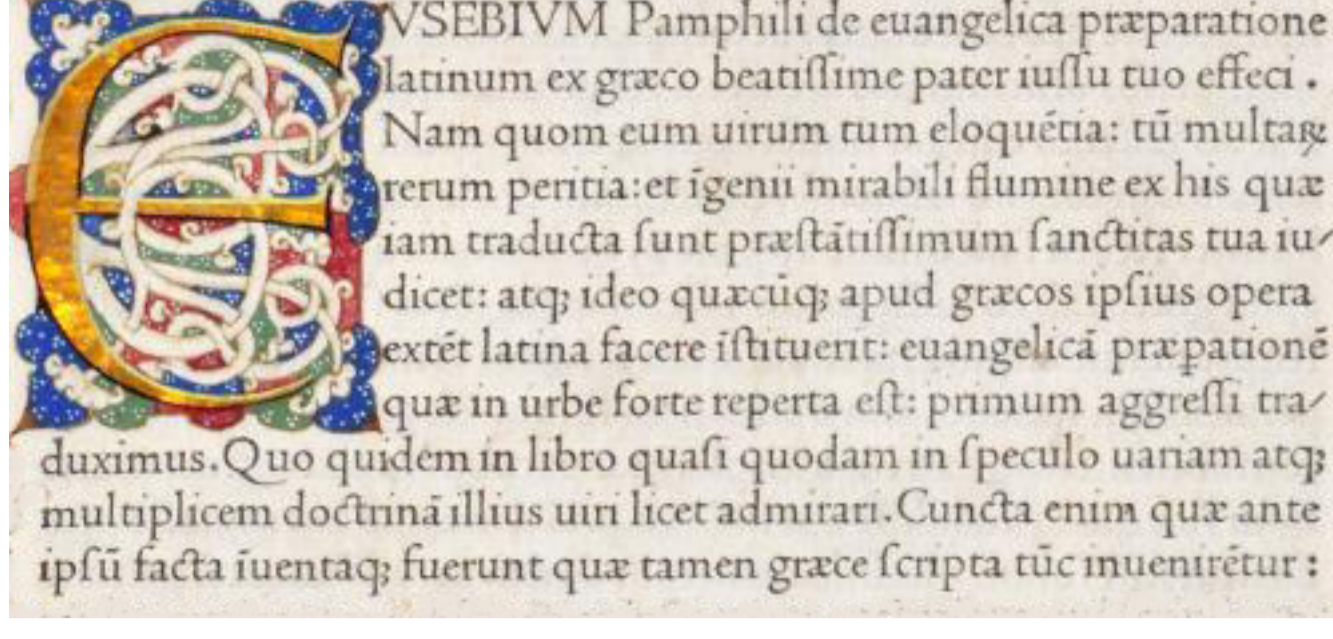


THE MANUAL

A guide to typographic knowledge and solutions

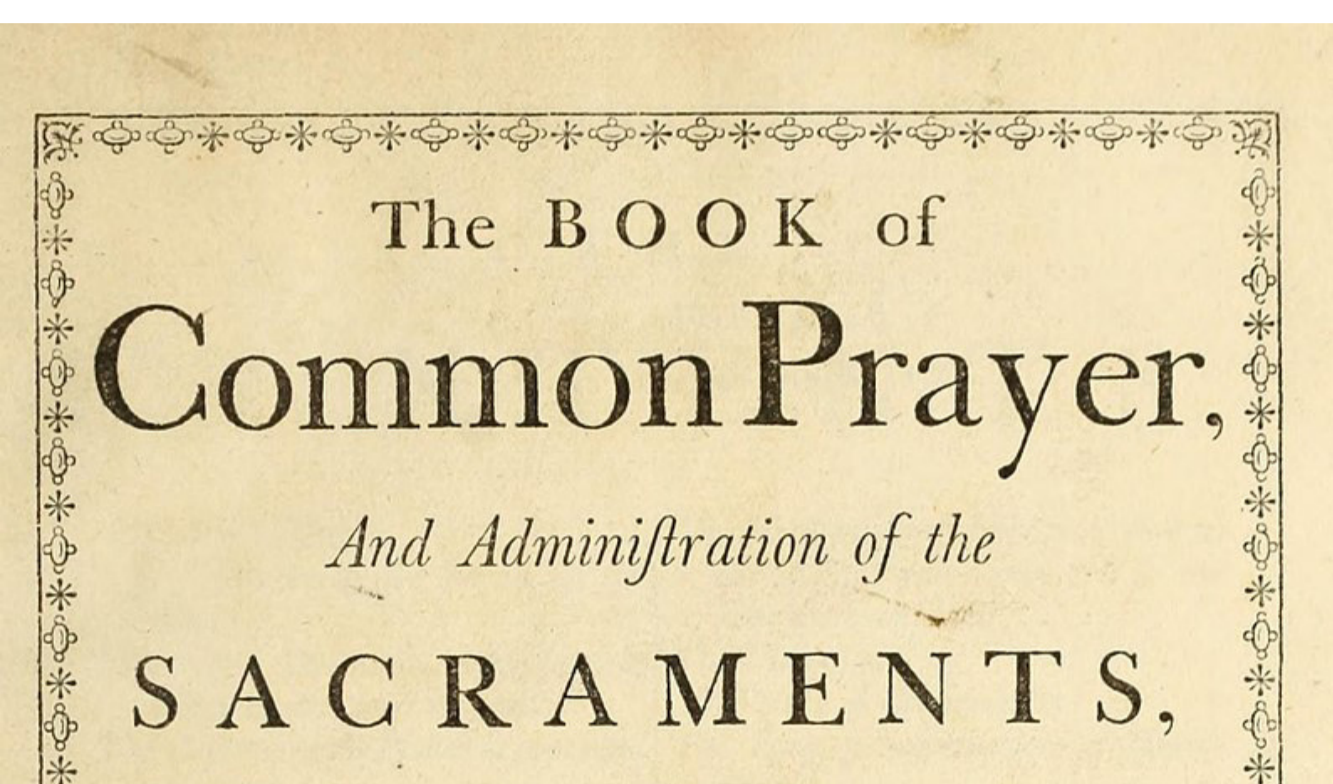
Typeface Families

When typefaces were first invented, the notion of having a family of type hadn't occurred to anyone. All fonts were simply roman designs. In the early 16th century, cursive – or italic (named after Italy, where the idea was popularized) – type was introduced. There were still no typeface families, however. Romans were one style of type and italics were another – much like serif and sans serif.



Nicholas Jenson's font from the 15th century

In the late 1700s, foundries began to release fonts in families – pairing roman and italic designs that matched each other in style. Later the concept of typeface weights and proportions was added to the typeface family mix. In the 20th century, type families were enlarged even further with the introduction of different designs such as condensed, expanded and outlined.



Nicholas Jenson's font from the 15th century

Modern Type Families

The person generally credited with conceiving the modern idea of a typeface family is Morris Fuller Benton, director of typeface development for American Type Founders in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Benton's premise was that typefaces within a family would share the basic characteristics of the parent design, but with individual variances. The Cheltenham, Century, Cloister, and Stymie typeface families are just a few of the designs developed under Benton's watchful eye.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Cheltenham Oldstyle | <i>Cheltenham Bold Condensed Italic</i> |
| Cheltenham Wide | CHELTENHAM BOLD EXTRA CONDENSED TITLE |
| Cheltenham Medium | Cheltenham Bold Extended |
| Cheltenham Bold | Cheltenham Extrabold |
| Cheltenham Bold Condensed | Cheltenham Inline |
| Cheltenham Bold Extra Condensed | Cheltenham Inline |
| Cheltenham Bold Outline | Extended |
| Cheltenham Oldstyle Condensed | Cheltenham Inline |
| <i>Cheltenham Italic</i> | Extra Condensed |
| <i>Cheltenham Medium Italic</i> | |
| Cheltenham Bold Italic | |

Cheltenham family from ATF, circa 1923

Planning by the Numbers

In 1957, the Swiss type designer Adrian Frutiger designed a new kind of type family. He felt that the traditional system of providing names – “bold,” “semi-bold,” and so on – was confusing and outdated, Frutiger proposed a logical, systematic numbering scheme. In his system, each typeface was given a two-digit suffix. The first digit classified the alphabet weight, with 3 indicating the lightest weight in the family and 8 the boldest. The second digit identified the typeface proportion, with higher numbers for condensed designs and lower numbers for expanded designs. In addition, if the second number was odd, the typeface was a roman design; if it was even, the typeface was italic.

			Univers 39
	Univers 45 <i>Univers 46</i>	Univers 47 <i>Univers 48</i>	Univers 49
Univers 53	Univers 55 <i>Univers 56</i>	Univers 57 <i>Univers 58</i>	Univers 59
Univers 63	Univers 65 <i>Univers 66</i>	Univers 67 <i>Univers 68</i>	
Univers 73	Univers 75 <i>Univers 76</i>		
Univers 83	Univers 85 <i>Univers 86</i>		

Univers Family Naming Convention

The naming system, however, seems to have won-out, as new families, and even revivals of older families that used the numeric system, have returned to using names like bold, extra bold, etc.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Frutiger 45 Light | Frutiger Next Light |
| <i>Frutiger 46 Light Italic</i> | <i>Frutiger Next Light Italic</i> |
| Frutiger 55 Roman | Frutiger Next Roman |
| <i>Frutiger 56 Italic</i> | <i>Frutiger Next Italic</i> |
| Frutiger 65 Bold | Frutiger Next Bold |
| <i>Frutiger 66 Bold Italic</i> | <i>Frutiger Next Bold Italic</i> |

Original Frutiger® naming system, 1976 (left) Frutiger® Next naming system, 2000 (right)

Extended Type Families

Some typeface families are made up of two or more sub-families. FF Kievit is a good example. Its sub-groups consist of Serif, Sans and Slab. Each design has roman and italic versions in nine weights for a total of 54 individual typefaces. The designs share the same cap height, lowercase x-height, stem weight and general proportions. Each typeface, however, is designed to stand on its own as a useful, distinctive communication tool. Slate™ and Macklin™, are other popular typeface families that are made up of sub-families.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| FF Kievit Light | FF Kievit Slab Light | FF Kievit Serif Light |
| FF Kievit Medium | FF Kievit Slab Medium | FF Kievit Serif Medium |
| FF Kievit Bold | FF Kievit Slab Bold | FF Kievit Serif Bold |
| FF Kievit Black | FF Kievit Slab Black | FF Kievit Serif Black |

Extended FF Kievit family

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Slate | Macklin |
| Egyptian Slate | Macklin Slab |
| | Macklin Sans |

More extended families

Size-specific Families

Another kind of type family has different designs for use at different sizes. ITC Bodoni is such a family. It's comprised of three size-sensitive variants, named Six, Twelve, and Seventy-two. These were designed to emulate the differences in the progressively-sized metal punches that Giambattista Bodoni created for his original fonts.

- ITC Bodoni Six
ITC Bodoni Twelve
ITC Bodoni Seventytwo

Three sizes of the ITC Bodoni family

And now we have variable fonts – which let you build your own typeface families. Typographic communication is virtually ubiquitous, and we now have typeface families for any project.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Helvetica® Now Variable | Tellumo™ Variable |
| Avenir® Next Variable | Vary™ Variable |

Just a few of the variable fonts available from MyFonts

Typefaces mentioned in this article

- [ITC Bodoni](#)
- [Egyptian Slate](#)
- [FF Kievit](#)
- [FF Kievit Serif](#)
- [FF Kievit Slab](#)
- [Frutiger®](#)
- [Frutiger® Next](#)
- [Macklin Sans](#)
- [Macklin Slab](#)
- [Macklin™](#)
- [Slate™](#)
- [Univers®](#)