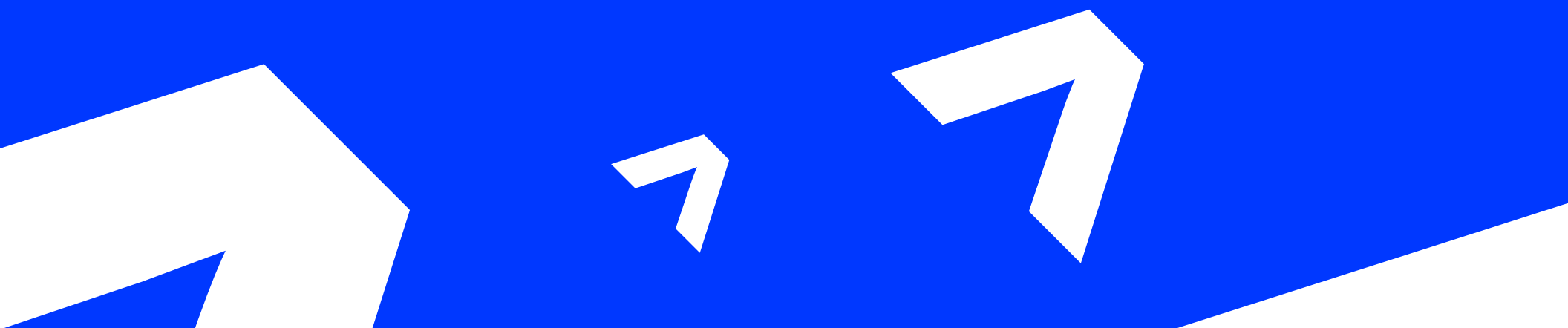


Making Small Type Stand Out

While a bold weight speaks with conviction, all- cap copy tends to yell.



Making Small Type Stand Out

Emphasizing copy – especially within running text – is a powerful and important typographic tool. It guides readers through blocks of copy, helping them spot special words and key phrases. There are several ways to do this. For specific situations, some are better than others.

Italics

Italic type offers a gentle highlight that attracts the eye without significantly altering the text's color or slowing the reading process. Italics blend smoothly with surrounding content and can be used frequently within running text.

When using italics, match the counterpart of the roman (upright) weight of the surrounding text. Avoid bold italics. They are harder to read – especially in longer passages.

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text's color.

Weight Contrast

Bold type creates a stronger, more assertive emphasis than italics – but it should be used sparingly. Excessive weight contrast can disrupt visual flow and produce a distracting “checkerboard” effect in blocks of copy.

Some typeface families have subtle weight gradations. Choose a bold weight with a significant jump. A subtle weight shift can be distracting and confusing to the reader.

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Type Size

Adjusting type size within a text copy block can be a playful, illustrative tool best used for expressive purposes. It is, however, generally not recommended for continuous text copy.

Type Style

Changing type style is a good emphasize – but not so much in running text. Save it for flyers, brochures, charts, listings, and diagrams, where it works best to establish a clear hierarchy of information.

All-caps are best reserved for dramatic call-outs, important headings, or stand-alone text in charts and graphs. **AVOID ALL-CAPS FOR MODERATE EMPHASIS.** Their uniform height can be visually harsh and disrupt reading flow.

Color

Setting select words or phrases in color can create noticeable yet harmonious emphasis. It can make text stand out without altering typestyle or formatting while still adding visual interest to the design. Just choose colors carefully. Bright colors pop, while light colored text fades into the background.

Bright colors **pop, while light colored type fades into the background.**

Use emphasis sparingly – overuse within running text dilutes its impact.

And, finally underlining is almost never a good idea – unless you want to mimic a typewriter.

Typefaces used in this article:

[Avenir® Next](#)

[Egyptian Slate™](#)

[Helvetica® Now](#)

[ITC Clearface®](#)

[Palatino® Nova](#)

[Recoleta™](#)

Save typeface changes for flyers, brochures, charts, listings, and diagrams, where it works best to establish a clear hierarchy of information.