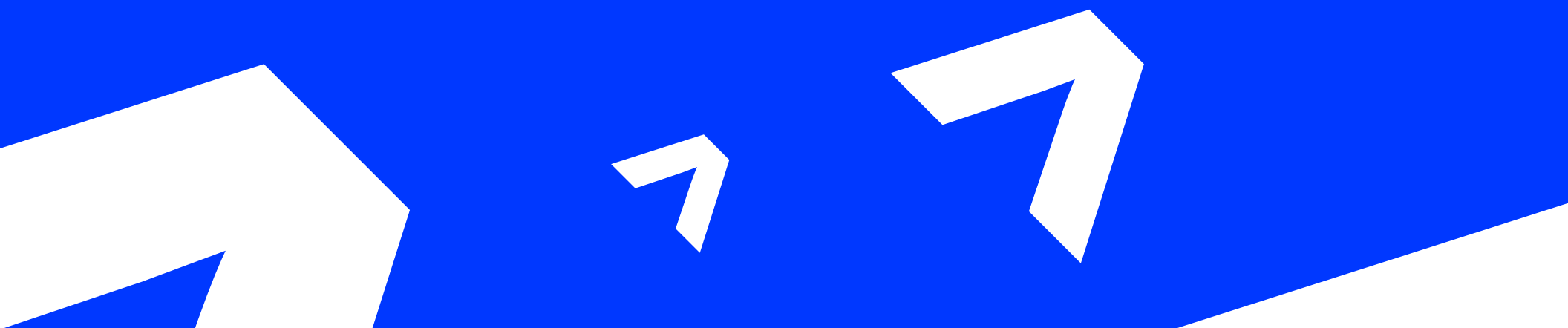


Glyph Positioning: Small Moves for Big Results

Most design software makes this easy to accomplish, but it takes attention to detail to recognize when adjustments are necessary.



Glyph Positioning: Small Moves for Big Results

Fonts are collections of glyphs carefully designed to work harmoniously in nearly any sequence. Sometimes, however, the best typography emerges only after subtle adjustments.

Occasionally, manual refinements – such as optically shifting individual characters or glyphs – are needed to achieve visual balance for the human eye. Without these small tweaks, some characters may appear awkward or out of place. While not disastrous, these minor imperfections can disrupt the smooth, seamless flow of information.

One common adjustment involves the vertical positioning of glyphs to optimize their placement. Although most design software makes these tweaks easy to execute, it takes a keen eye and attention to detail to know when they are needed.

In most fonts, parentheses, brackets, and braces are designed to vertically center around lowercase letters. When they enclose all-caps text, however, they often sit too low. Raising these characters slightly to visually align with the height of the all-caps text creates a more balanced and aesthetically pleasing appearance. This principle often applies to bullets and boxes.

[contact]

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Glyphs in red need a little adjusting

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Glyphs in red need a little adjusting

Hyphens, and dashes are also commonly drawn to center between lowercase characters. When used with cap-height characters, they appear too low. Raising them slightly creates better typography.

The same holds true for bullets, dashes and ornaments.

Both ™ and ® symbols are placed as superscripts relative to the main text, usually appearing at the top-right corner of the word or logo they are trademarking or registering. They should be smaller than the main text but still large enough to be readable.

If you want to finesse your typography to achieve a professional-looking result, don't forget to review these important, yet often overlooked details.

Typefaces used in this article

[Egyptian Slate](#)

[Legacy Serif](#)

ITC Legacy™

ITC Legacy™

ITC Legacy Serif®

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