

Legibility & Readability

Art & Design

Two questions: can the letter be told apart, is the text easy to read?

Legibility - the face

- Can I tell l from 1 from capital I?
- Open apertures, clear counters
- Distinct letter shapes
- A property of the typeface design
- Matters most when small or distant

Readability - the setting

- Can I read this for an hour?
- Size, measure, leading, contrast
- Alignment and word spacing
- A property of how it has been set
- Matters most over long text

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

A legible face set badly is unreadable. A less legible face set well can still read comfortably.

Contested: research on typeface and reading speed is mixed and confounded by familiarity. Setting effects are better evidenced.