

Type Classification

Art & Design

The historical categories, their dates, and how to recognise each one by eye.

The Vox groupings, simplified.

Class	Period	How to spot it
Humanist serif	1470s	Slanted e bar, low contrast
Old style	1500s-1700s	Angled stress, bracketed serifs
Transitional	1700s	More contrast, vertical stress
Didone	1780s-1800s	Extreme contrast, hairline serifs
Slab serif	1810s	Heavy rectangular serifs
Grotesque sans	1830s-1900s	Closed apertures, even weight
Geometric sans	1920s	Circular o, single-storey a

Classification says where a face came from, not what it may be used for. Gill Sans has set both novels and road signs.