

FOURTH EDITION

The
Designer's
Guide to
Professional
Typography

Includes
access to
**BONUS
VIDEOS**

type rules!

*Ilene
Strizver*

WILEY

FOURTH EDITION

*the
designer's
guide to
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typography*


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*Ilene
Strizver*

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my father, Leonard Strizver, who taught me to believe in myself and that the sky was the limit to what I could accomplish. Unfortunately he did not live long enough to see his words take shape in my life.

I hope I have made you proud, Dad.

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As someone whose academic beginnings focused on music and fine art, I was extremely lucky to have crossed paths with some of the most openhearted and talented individuals in the world of typography and graphic design, almost in spite of myself. Aaron Burns, Ed Benguiat, Herb Lubalin, Bob Farber, and Allan Haley permanently altered my life's path, and I will be forever indebted to them. Their creative brilliance coupled with their incredible generosity of spirit ignited within me a passion for type that will never be satiated.

Through the years, there have been countless graphic designers, type designers, typographers, and other creative professionals who have unselfishly shared their knowledge and passion for type and design with me. To all of them I offer my deepest thanks, for without them, this book never would have come to be.

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I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to all the instructors who willingly shared their teaching methods and assignments with me and, as well, to the students who allowed the use of their assignment solutions for publication.

I could never express enough appreciation to all my students and workshop attendees. They continue to keep me on my toes; push me to learn newer and better methods, technique, and software; and challenge me to offer a better explanation. Their talent, enthusiasm, and passion for learning inspire me to be the best I can be.


And last but not least, a very special thanks to my editor, Margaret Cummins, whose unwavering belief in me and in this book, combined with her own vision of what it could be, inspired me to new heights.

PREFACE

This fourth edition of *Type Rules!* has been revised and expanded in a number of ways. The content has not only been updated to reflect current standards and practices in typography, design, and technology, but also significantly expanded to include the most up-to-date information on type on the web, type in motion, and type on other digital devices. All chapters have updated Tectips and Typetips, as well both new and tried-and-true Exercises, many of which include some very exciting student solutions.

- **TECHTIPS** are instructional sidebars on how to employ some of the typographic principles and techniques featured throughout the book using one of the most widely used design applications, Adobe InDesign CS6 for Mac OS X.
- **TYPETIPS** are sidebars that contain helpful hints and tasty tidbits that explain how to finesse your type in more detail.
- And last, but definitely not least, the Exercises are intended to assist in learning and understanding typographic principles, and how to apply them to design projects. These Exercises, which follow each chapter, are intended for educators and students, but they can be used by anyone who wants to reinforce and apply the material in this book—and wind up with some great portfolio pieces as well!

* * * * *

This fourth edition has been expanded with the addition of bonus videos to accompany Chapters 11 and 12. When you see the video icon , visit <http://www.wiley.com/go/typerules> and enter the access code located at the back of this book to view the video content.

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INTRODUCTION

Type is all around us, in everything we read, from product packaging in the grocery store to television commercials, from greeting cards, books, and magazines to movie credits and storefront signs. Learning to read and write the alphabet is one of the first things we are taught in school, and that process often begins before nursery school with television shows and videos intended for the hungry and curious minds of two- and three-year-olds.

Type and printed matter not only communicate information to us but also influence decisions we make on a daily basis. Whether we realize it or not, type and the way it appears affects which CD or book cover catches our eyes, which detergent we think might make the whites whiter, and which movie seems like it might be the scariest or most romantic. Much of this process goes on unconsciously, which is why the art and craft of typography is so invisible to the average person. But its unseen nature by no means diminishes the importance and influence type has on the quality and substance of our daily lives.

Type Rules! is intended for anyone interested in typography, be they a professional graphic designer, an instructor, or a novice computer user. There is something here for everyone, whether you know a little or a lot about type. This book does not have to be read front to back; you may thumb through the chapters and stop wherever something sparks your interest, or you may read it chapter after chapter, cover to cover. This book will stimulate and satisfy the neophyte's interest in type as well as offer advanced information and techniques to professional graphic designers who want to improve their work.

Typography is not taught (or taught effectively, in my experience) in every design school, as it should be. When it is, the focus is often on typographic design in its broadest sense, not the nuts and bolts of how to set type tastefully and effectively; addressing this void is my primary objective. This book is intended to help you learn how to communicate effectively and professionally with type, no matter what the medium, device, or platform.

* * * * *

I can trace my interest in type and letterforms back to the posters I drew for my junior high school elections. I remember spending hours on the lettering: measuring out the strokes of each character, the spaces between each letter, and the spaces between the lines. Those posters would appear extremely crude by professional standards, but my interest in the geometry of letters and the relationships between their positive and negative spaces was evident even then.

After studying music and then fine art in college, I was lucky enough to land a seat in Ed Benguiat's lettering class at the School of Visual Arts in New York City; my life was never the same again. Ed instilled in me the passion for type that I have today and with which I will attempt to infect you. The bad news is that if I succeed, there is really no cure for it; the good news is that "catching it" will open your eyes to many exciting things you have never seen before and allow you to enjoy and appreciate the world around you in a completely new way.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TYPE

The story of type doesn't begin with type per se, rather it starts with the beginning of mankind and civilization. Type has only existed for about 560 years, but its beginnings are rooted in the life of the caveman himself, as it was his developing needs and habits that led civilization on a path toward the evolution of the alphabet and subsequently the invention of type and printing. It is certainly possible to learn to use type effectively and tastefully without knowing its roots, but to fully understand and appreciate type today, it is important to know something of the past.

Milestones in the history of type are highlighted throughout this chapter. Some of the dates, chronology, and details vary from source to source, but the spirit of the events remains the same. These events have taken mankind on a glorious ride from the crudest cave drawings to the bits and bytes of type in the digital age.

SOUNDS TO SYMBOLS

For many years, early humans communicated purely with sound. Verbal language—which is heard and not seen as opposed to visual language (or visible language, as it is often called)—has many limitations: it is gone the instant it is spoken and heard, and it is therefore temporary. Stories, history, and other information could not be passed from generation to generation in a permanent way, only by direct word of mouth.

The earliest attempts to record stories and ideas were through cave drawings; the first known is dated around 25,000 BC. These drawings, or pictographs, were very simple representations of people, places, and things, and for this reason, they were relatively easy to learn and understand. Although this was a very simple form of written communication, it was certainly more permanent than sound, and much of it has survived the ravages of time and still exists today. (Fig. 1-1)

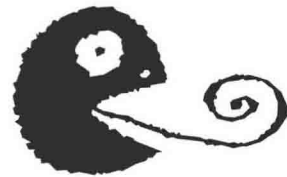
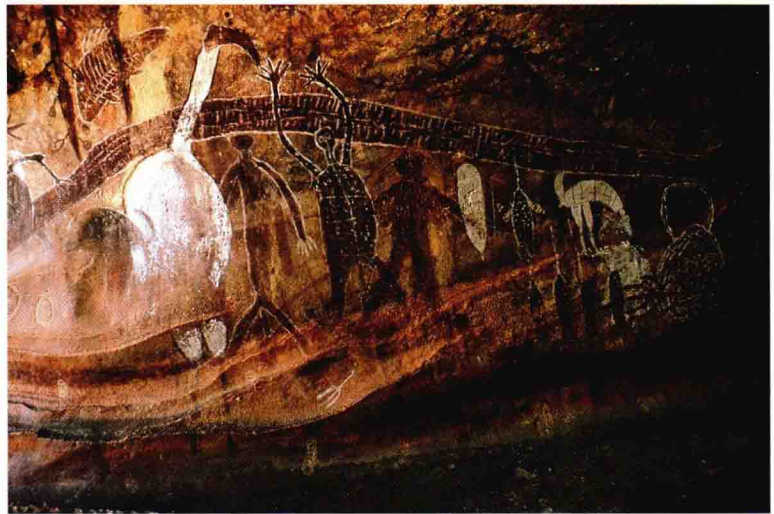


Figure 1-1 This Aboriginal rock painting (c. 13,000 BC), located in a cave in Queensland, Australia, is a distinctive example of the earliest form of written communication.
Photograph courtesy of Axel Poignant Archive.



Around 3000 BC the Sumerians developed cuneiform, a writing system that consisted of wedge-shaped forms carved into clay tablets and other hard surfaces. Cuneiform evolved from the pictographs that the Sumerians had adapted earlier and was one of the first writing systems to read left to right. Its wedge-shaped forms were the result of the use of a stylus, a writing tool whose straight edges and triangular corners produced these geometric forms.

As time passed, there was a need for more symbols to represent ideas and other concepts in addition to just “things.” This led to the development of ideograms, or symbols, to represent ideas and actions. This new, expanded system was more difficult for the masses to understand, as it was not purely representational but more symbolic in nature. This separated society into two groups: those who could understand this system and those who could not. The spoken and written language had become very different from each other, requiring the learning of two unrelated systems of communication.

As society became more complex, the existing writing system did not meet its increasing needs and was no longer satisfactory; something more was needed. This need subsequently led to the development of letter symbols that, when put together, represented words.

The Phoenicians, a society of traders and skilled craftsmen on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, took written language a giant step forward from the pictograms and

PHOENICIAN	NAME	PHONETIC NAME	EARLY GREEK	CLASSICAL GREEK	NAME	GREEK	ENGLISH
𐤀	aleph		𐤁	Α	alpha	Α α	a
𐤂	beth	b	𐤃	Β	beta	Β β	b
𐤄	gimel	g	𐤅	Γ	gamma	Γ γ	g
𐤆	daleth	d	𐤇	Δ	delta	Δ δ	d
𐤈	he	h	𐤉	Ε	epsilon	Ε ε	e
𐤊	waw	w	𐤋		digamma		
𐤌	zayin	z	𐤍	Ζ	zeta	Ζ ζ	z
𐤎	heth	h	𐤏	Η	eta	Η η	ē
𐤐	teth	t	𐤑	Θ	theta	Θ θ	th
𐤒	yod	y	𐤓	Ι	iota	Ι ι	i
𐤔	kaph	k	𐤕	Κ	kappa	Κ κ	k
𐤖	lamed	l	𐤗	Λ	lambda	Λ λ	l
𐤙	mem	m	𐤚	Μ	mu	Μ μ	m
𐤛	nun	n	𐤜	Ν	nu	Ν ν	n
𐤞	samekh	s			xi	Ξ ξ	x
𐤠	ayin		𐤡	Ο	omicron	Ο ο	o
𐤢	pe	p	𐤣	Π	pi	Π π	p
𐤥	sade	s	𐤦		san		
𐤨	qoph	q	𐤩		qoppa		
𐤫	reš	r	𐤬	Ρ	rho	Ρ ρ	r
𐤭	šin	sh/s	𐤮	Σ	sigma	Σ σς	s
𐤯	taw	t	𐤰		tau	Τ τ	t
				Υ	upsilon	Υ υ	u, y
					phi	Φ φ	ph
				Χ	chi	Χ χ	kh
					psi	Ψ ψ	ps
				Ω	omega	Ω ω	ō

Figure 1-2 This chart shows the evolution of the Greek alphabet, which was originally adapted from the twenty-two-character, all-consonant Phoenician alphabet. The Greeks added several new characters as well as vowels.

ideograms of the Sumerians. Around 1000 BC the Phoenicians developed twenty-two symbols that corresponded to the twenty-two key sounds of their language. Their idea was to connect these symbols (representing sounds) to imitate spoken words, thus eliminating the need for memorization of hundreds of unrelated symbols. This was the first attempt to connect the written language with the spoken word; we now call this phonetics. (Fig. 1-2)

Around 800 BC, the Greeks embraced the Phoenician invention and took it a step further by adding vowels and naming the symbols. They also employed boustrophedon (meaning “as the ox plows”), a system in which one reads from left to right on one line and right to left on the next. (Fig. 1-3)

Much later, the Romans, a highly developed society, made further changes by adding more letters, bringing this writing system even closer to our modern-day alphabet. They made other advances as well. The Roman scribes, in their attempt to write more quickly and efficiently, began joining and slanting letters in harmony with the natural motion of the hand. In addition, they added ascenders and descenders, as well



Figure 1-3 The Greek writing system employed boustrophedon (“as the ox plows”), a system in which one reads from left to right on one line and right to left on the next. Notice how the letters are reversed from one line to another.

as condensed forms of the alphabet in order to conserve space.

One of the Romans’ most important contributions to early writing was Trajan’s Column, dated 114 AD. It showcases one of the most beautiful and best-known examples of Roman letterforms. The lettering, which is incised at the base of the column, is a classical, elegant, and exquisitely balanced combination of form, proportion, and simplicity. It has been, and continues to be, a powerful inspiration to type designers throughout the world. (Fig. 1-4 and Fig. 1-5)

Special mention should be made here of the tremendous contributions to the art of writing by the Chinese and by other Asian cultures. Although their writing systems are not alphabetic but rather consist of thousands of symbols, their extreme artistry, subtlety of form, and mastery of the art of calligraphy have been a continuous source of beauty, poetic elegance, and inspiration to all who come in contact with them.



Figure 1-4 (Upper) The lettering at the base of Trajan’s Column, dated 114 AD, one of the best-known and most beautiful examples of Roman letterforms. (Lower) Close-up of the inscription. Photographs courtesy of Bill Thayer & Graphion.