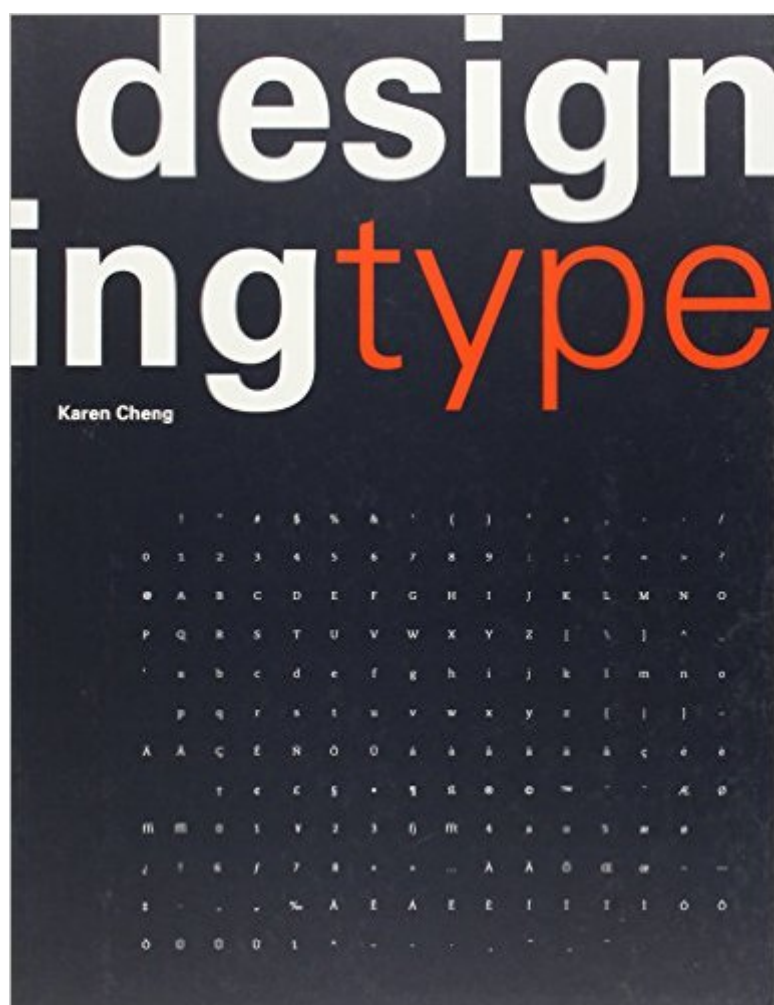


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# Designing Type



## Synopsis

One of the most essential tools of graphic design, typography influences the appearance of visual print materials perhaps more than any other component. This essential book explains the processes behind creating and designing type. Author Karen Cheng discusses issues of structure, optical compensation, and legibility, with special emphasis given to the often overlooked relationships between letters and shapes in font design. The book is illustrated with numerous diagrams that demonstrate visual principles and letter construction, ranging from informal progress sketches to final type designs and diagrams. A wide range of classic and modern typefaces is analyzed, including those from many premier contemporary type foundries. Introductory essays and diagrams emphasize the history of type, the primary systems of typeface classification, the two main proportional systems for type, the parts of a letter, the effects of new technology on design methodology, the optical illusions that affect density and balance in letterforms, and the differences in form between basic serif typestyles. The book provides detailed guidelines for creating serif and sans serif letters, numbers, punctuation, and accents. As design clients increasingly call for original and custom typefaces, *Designing Type* is a superb reference for both students and professional graphic designers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ok, you slugged it through design school where you learned about typefaces like serif, sans serif, ornamental...the works. While you now know the difference between Bauhaus and Arial, you still

don't know how to design a typeface. Designing Type can rescue you, especially if you need to design a typeface in a hurry for a client who demands something to go with his product line...Author Karen Cheng, associate professor at the University of Washington's Visual Communication Design Program in Seattle, teaches type design and typography. The lessons that she includes in her book are so simple that you can understand the type designer's process almost overnight. Cheng states, "There is no single, 'correct' process for creating a typeface. The methodologies of individual designers are as unique and varied as the designs themselves." From this starting point, Cheng proceeds to explain how a typeface is developed, and then provides examples and diagrams that demonstrate visual principles, type construction, and optical illusions that affect typeface uniformity. She creates a step-by-step process through letters, numbers, and punctuation and accents, all developed through a variety of methods from sketching to vector graphics. While Cheng does include history of type and foundries in her narratives, the emphasis is on type development. The only problem that you might face is that Cheng focuses only on serif and sans serif faces, and these choices are generic. However, after reading the book, I discovered that her lessons applied to all serifs and sans serif typefaces and families, and that it was just another step of imagination - buoyed by a new understanding of type - to begin to create ornamental type. For the price, this book is worth its weight in gold for anyone who wants to learn more about how type works as a stand-alone design or as a design element within a larger format. Highly recommended for students and for the working designer.

Absolutely a must have for aspiring and junior typeface or logo designers. However, the book is not an easy read; it should be read cover to cover with patience before being used as a workbook reference. Its text requires a sound prior knowledge of typography and related technologies. And it must be read in tandem with close observation of the numerous illustrations and diagrams to be fully understood and appreciated. The information shared by the author is not available elsewhere unless one attends graduate school in type design or apprentices to a type designer. I had completed my first roman & small cap font before I acquired this book and hadn't started my companion italic yet. And though the author doesn't cover italic type design her thoroughness in her analytical and comparative approach is such that I have the book open like a workbook for every italic character and am redrawing some of my romans. I've been teaching graphic design for 30 years and though so much has changed the fundamental and essential have not though they have evolved. This book will become a classic for serious professionals because of the level of insight that it gives into the essentials of type design.

Most typography books I've seen are showcases of designers and their client projects. These books may have their place for readers who are seeking inspiration and brief but helpful tips for project management. However, none of these books discuss the actual nuts and bolts of creating fonts. Cheng's book fills this gap by focusing only on typographic design, and does so in such a highly informative way that anyone who designs fonts cannot afford to be without it. Not only are all the individual aspects of type examined, but different fonts are compared and contrasted to reveal their sometimes very subtle differences. Cheng showcases many examples of her own students' work as well so the reader can see creative applications of typographical principles. A brief but highly valuable section on punctuation is also included. The only caveat I have to offer potential readers is that this book does not cover cursive fonts, which makes sense and isn't worth deducting a star for. In all, this book is the one you need if you want to make your own fonts. currently only has it available through third party sellers so get it while you still can!

For either those that have been loving typography for many years, or those that just recently have fallen infatuated. This exhaustive documentation of type-crafting minutiae is a MUST-have for reference and obsessive appreciation of classic forms and details. Karen's careful eye will help you dissect all the classics... Perhaps even discover missed aspects of a much-visited serif, perhaps finally understanding the commonality of a specific "m" proportion, perhaps understand the evolution of "g"... Many hours of delight await for you within its pages. Get it. You posted this review 5 days ago.

In case you haven't figured this out on your own, type design is very difficult. All kinds of odd optical illusion type things happen when you reduce a large monitor-screen-sized character to 10 points, especially when the letter is rasterized for your monitor screen at that small size. This is THE book (perhaps the only book) that teaches you about the issues on a letter-by-letter basis. If you're going to design type you absolutely must get this book. If you don't then you should be locked up for your insanity.

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