

Foundation

A collection of 5 related typefaces



Foundation is a suite of revival typefaces inspired by fonts from historical typeface specimens originating from America, France, and Nordic countries.

The *Foundation* fonts (two serifs and three sans serifs) are eclectic, with their own *unique character* and *distinct history*. Inspiration for the design came from three principal sources: the *Barnhart Brothers & Spindler* specimen No.9 (1907), a *Deberny & Peignot* specimen (1934), and an alphabet sheet from the *Gunnar Biilmann Petersen Archive* (1939). What unites such disparate fonts as a group is that they are all skeletal in form. *To emphasize their barebones, elemental nature, the fonts have been named Foundation.*



SPEND A WEEK AT FOREST LAKE

Come out over Sunday and let Nature prove that in this section of her domains she offers more enticing opportunities for recreation than in any other

The Lake and Country

Right in the heart of the shadiest grove in Sylvane Forest and on the banks of a clear, cool lake lies the quiet little hamlet of Sylvane. The lake is over two miles long, clear as crystal, and abounds in gamey fish. Bathing is unequalled and the Mortar Mud Baths are another natural attraction.

New Forest Hotel

The new hotel is by far the most substantial building of its kind in the lake region and is superior to any for homelike accommodations and those little conveniences every traveler enjoys. A modern fire-proof structure of 300 rooms, baths, open-air dining room and spacious verandas. The Pavilion offers dancing and entertainment, tallies go to the Forest

City Park
The Club
Address to

TEMPERANCE RALLY MEETINGS

Will be held under the auspices of The Northward Park
League of The Seventy-second Street Episcopal Church

After the Great Summer Campaign

An Aftermath of Our Great Victory and Service of Thanksgiving
Interesting Chemical Experiments and Speakers

NORTHWARD PARK LAWN

Week of November 25-3, 1905 Everyone invited

Foundation Sans Number 44 was inspired by *Circular Gothic No. 44* as shown on pp. 235 and 473 of the Barnhart Brothers & Spindler Specimen Book no. 9. *Circular Gothic No. 44* was designed in 1879 by Charles E. Heyer (born 1841 in Berlin as Carl Emil Heyer; died 1897 in Chicago), who cut the face for the *Great Western Type Foundry*, the predecessor of *Barnhart Brothers & Spindler (BBS)*. It was patented under the redundant name *Grotesque Gothic* on September 9, 1879 as a capitals-and-small capitals only typeface. In that configuration, it was presumably intended for social printing. Although lightface types became popular in the United States after the middle of the 19th century, it appears that Heyer's design was the first lightface sans serif. The success of *Grotesque Gothic* led BBS in September 1882 to announce the addition of a lowercase (probably designed by Heyer as well since he was the foundry's principal type designer from 1879 until his death). The foundry promoted the expanded typeface, now known as *Lightface Gothic*, as "...EXCELLENT and USEFUL for getting up neat and attractive Circulars, Programmes, Etc." The name was changed by 1882 when *The American Model Printer* (vol. II, no. 2 December 1882-January 1883) described it as "...a medium-squared, light-faced cut letter, with just enough modern embellishment [referring to a few characters that had swash variants] to make it a favourite where delicately light and exquisite results are desired." The new name described its intended usage not its appearance. The *BBS Specimen Book no. 9* shows *Circular Gothic No. 44* in 6 pt, 8 pt, 10 pt, 12 pt, 18 pt and 24 pt sizes. There are subtle but clear differences among the sizes. *Foundation Sans Number 44* most closely resembles the 24 pt size, but *A2-TYPE* has also taken forms from the smaller sizes. Kubel has changed the widths of some characters, smoothed out the curves of others, and – of course – created glyphs not present in the specimen. Taking a cue from the final name of the *BBS* face, he has followed the 8 and 12 pt sizes in making the bowls of b, c, d, e, g, o, p and q circular. At the same time he has left C, G, O and Q oval as they are in all sizes. Thus, *Foundation Sans Number 44* hovers between a grotesque and a geometric sans serif.

Both **Foundation Sans Condensed** and **Foundation Sans Wide** are derived from two types described as *Caractères pour Marques de Linge* (typefaces for marking on linen) in the *Signes* section of the first volume of *Spécimen Général des Fonderies Deberny et Peignot* (c.1934): respectively, *Caractère No. 1*, a condensed sans serif, and *Caractère No. 7*, a wide sans serif. Both are light grotesques (antiques maigres) and as such are oddities in the volume which is set, with the exception of the running heads and some captions, entirely in Europe, the foundry's name for its licensed version of *Futura*. The inclusion of the *Caractères pour Marques de Linge* in the *Signes* section of the specimen book – lumped together with meteorological signs, botanical and medical signs, manicules (mains indicatrices), arrows, musical notation, and other miscellaneous typographical material – indicated that they were outside of the normal world of type.

These types were not intended for printing with ink on paper, but for stamping onto cloth. (The foundry also advertised *Marques Graves*: a service for creating marks from company logotypes that could be stamped into metal. Because the *Caractères pour Marques de Linge* were not part of *Deberny & Peignot's* regular type offerings – those were shown separately in volume 2 – they are orphans with no known history. This is reflected in their generic names. Since they have no geometric pretensions they are undoubtedly of 19th century origin, a supposition reinforced by the presence of *Caractère No. 8*, derived from *Monastic* issued by the *Caslon* foundry in 1864, on the same page.

Foundation Serif is based on *Caractère No. 7*, another *Caractères pour Marques de Linge* in the c.1934 *Deberny & Peignot* specimen book. It is a skeletal slab serif. Small touches such as the tail of Q, the leg of R, and the figures 2, 5 and 7 indicate that it is 19th century in origin and not part of the new rational slab serif style that appeared as an offshoot of the geometric sans serif phenomenon in the early 1930s. This is borne out by its appearance in *Le Livret Typographique* by *Deberny & Cie.* (1893) where it has the generic name *Caractères Maigres* and a code that indicates it was designed in 1891. For each of the three fonts inspired by the

MARQUES DE LINGE ET POINTURES

CARACTÈRES POUR MARQUES DE LINGE

Caractère N° 1 sur 14 points, minimum 1 kilo

A B C D E F G H J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z Æ W Ç È É Ê Ë & -
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Caractère N° 7 sur 14 points, minimum 2 kilos

B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U
V X Y Z Æ W Ç È É Ê Ë , - () ! ?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Caractère N° 2 sur 12 points, minimum 1 kilo

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z
Æ Ç È W Ç È É Ê Ë & , , ' () ? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Caractère N° 8 sur 18 points, minimum 3 kilos

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U
V X Y Z Æ W & , , - ' () ! ?

BLOCS POUR POINTURES

Sur 14 points

24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39
40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 ¼ ½ ¾ BIS

Sur 14 points

6 6¼ 6½ 6¾ 7 7¼ 7½ 7¾
8 8¼ 8½ 8¾ 9

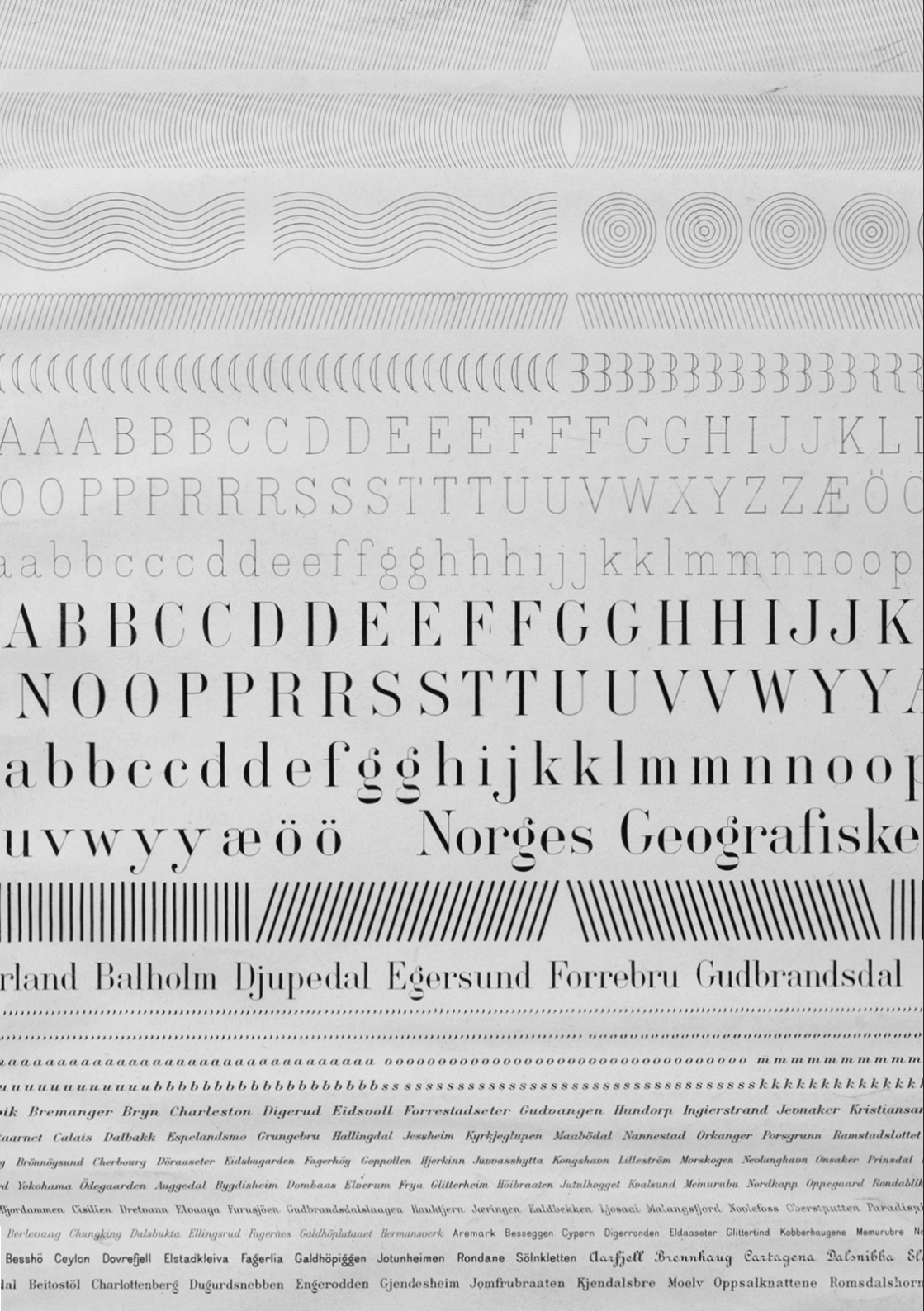
MARQUES GRAVÉES

CHEMISERIE MODELE
29, RUE JEANNE D'ARC
ROUEN

OLD ENGLAND
12, Bd des Capucines
PARIS

A L'INCROYABLE
46, Rue de Rivoli
PARIS

Sur demande, nous exécutons la gravure de toutes marques suivant tarif spécial.



Caractères pour Marques de Linge Kubel had to invent the entire lowercase from scratch since the *Deberny & Peignot* samples are strictly capitals and figures. They adjusted the proportions of the original characters (including refining overshoots) to create more harmonious designs. This is most notable in the figures.

Foundation Serif Didot, despite its name, has no direct connection to the types of *Firmin Didot* or other members of the extensive Didot clan. Instead, it is indicative of the long shadow that types by the Didot family cast over 19th century printing, not only in France but also in other European countries. A2-TYPE's inspiration for *Foundation Serif Didot*, was a sheet of lettering (dated August 21, 1939) Kubel discovered in the archive of the influential Danish architect & graphic/industrial designer *Gunnar Biilmann Petersen, 1897-1968*: The *Biilmann Petersen* sheet contains a series of vertical, slanted, curved and wavy parallel lines; a monoline slab serif set of letters; a didone set of letters; various Norwegian place names in the didone style (italic and backslanted as well as roman) along with some in sans serif and ronde; and Norwegian words paired with cartographic marks. It was undoubtedly part of a mapmaking project. The sharpness and consistency of the letters on the *Biilmann Petersen* sheet belies the fact that they are hand drawn and not type. Although the didone letters captivated A2-TYPE, especially the *g* with its open loop, *Foundation Serif Didot* is based on the skeletal slab serif letters. However, the name makes sense since that skeletal alphabet is clearly the foundation for the didone one. For *Foundation Serif Didot* A2-TYPE did not have to invent a lowercase, but he did have to create his own Q, a letter not used in Norwegian, along with figures and punctuation. A2's Q, with its unusual tail, is one of the highlights of the *Foundation* set. Despite the fact that all of A2's models for the members of the *Foundation* set come from 20th century sources, they are 19th century at heart. It is this, coupled with their shared skeletal structures, that gives the five *Foundation* fonts stylistic unity.

Paul Shaw, NYC August, 2018

Foundation Sans Condensed

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

Thin
Light
Book
Regular
Medium
SemiBold
Bold
ExtraBold
Black
Heavy

Thin Italic
Light Italic
Book Italic
Regular Italic
Medium Italic
SemiBold Italic
Bold Italic
ExtraBold Italic
Black Italic
Heavy Italic

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Foundation Serif

Thin

Light

Book

Regular

Medium

SemiBold

Bold

ExtraBold

Black

Heavy

Thin Italic

Light Italic

Book Italic

Regular Italic

Medium Italic

SemiBold Italic

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Foundation Sans Wide

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Light
Book
Regular
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SemiBold
Bold
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Black
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Thin Italic
Light Italic
Book Italic
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SemiBold Italic
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Foundation Serif Didot

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Thin	<i>Thin Italic</i>
Light	<i>Light Italic</i>
Book	<i>Book Italic</i>
Regular	<i>Regular Italic</i>
Medium	<i>Medium Italic</i>
SemiBold	<i>SemiBold Italic</i>
Bold	Bold Italic
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Foundation Sans Number 44

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0123456789

Thin	Thin Italic
Light	Light Italic
Book	Book Italic
Regular	Regular Italic
Medium	Medium Italic
SemiBold	SemiBold Italic
Bold	Bold Italic
ExtraBold	ExtraBold Italic
Black	Black Italic
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Foundation: from 5 weights to 100 fonts

The idea of using a mono-linear design as a model for an expansive set of interrelated fonts is not entirely new. However, using this model posed a unique design challenge and something we hadn't done before. Questions such as: what should a bold font weight look like? Would a mono-linear design carry through? Should there be a contrasted design variation? The latter became a deciding factor, especially as our design of Foundation Serif evolved and more contrast was essential to better craft curves and junctions. The solution was to leave the lighter weights mono-linear and to design a set of low contrast font weights for the bolder variants, medium and upwards.

Our historical source material – a key source of inspiration, though not complete, did not contain italic styles – so these were created from scratch so that the complete set of fonts meet the criteria of a modern digital font. All Foundation fonts share the exact same proportions and weight measurements, which means that all capital letters have the same height, all stems measure the same amount of units, and all fonts contain the same amount of glyphs. With the publication of this specimen, we proudly introduce the italics! Plus numerous new font weights. The complete set of Foundation fonts now totals one hundred! With each font comprising 10 weights: Thin, Light, Regular, Book, Medium, SemiBold, Bold, Extrabold, Black & Heavy, with matching and accompanying Italics.

The font set, in its entirety, offers an advanced palette for all kinds of design applications and scales. The fonts are built on foundations that are solid and wide, as well as being delicate at one end and almost brutal in their appearance in the heavier weights! There are no limits! Just your imagination. All fonts are available as Variable Fonts.

A2/SW/HK + A2-TYPE

5 Cotton's Gardens
London E2 8DN

WWW.A2-TYPE.CO.UK
44 (0)20 7739 4249

Specimen design by A2/SW/HK
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