


Multiple-Master Font Samples

This document presents and discusses several multiple-master fonts. All of the text in this document was typeset with the \TeX typesetting system under the \E\TeX macro package using FontKit—a tool that adds multiple-master font support to \TeX .

JENSON: TYPE AS FROM AN EARLIER AGE

❧ As a two-axis multiple-master font, *Jenson*[™] can render both **large** and tiny text with good readability, thanks to its *optical-size* axis, which allows subtle variations in the shape of the glyphs based on the size at which the font is set. Jenson also has a *weight* axis that can be used to adjust the weight of the font from light to **bold**.

VARIANTS

While proper SMALL CAPS are essential, it is also very useful to have *ITALIC*  SMALL CAPS at our disposal. Both are available with Jenson.

❧ Jenson also includes swash capitals, which can be useful when you want to set italic text with an extra flourish—compare “*The Quick Brown Fox & Royal Hound Eat Zebra Gammon With Yellow Mustard*” with the more pedestrian “*The Quick Brown Fox & Royal Hound Eat Zebra Gammon...*”.

Jenson also provides alternate letter forms that make it “Quite simply the finest font for your special historical projects”. Of course, you shouldn’t strike *Jenson* from your list just because your message comes from slightly more recent times. Jenson’s set of alternate letter forms has been described by some as *very nice*, by others as *crisp*, and by some as *essential*.

Finally, Jenson includes a few ornaments and an expert set, allowing you to set phrases such as “Efficient shuffle buffers flagged 10,289 files” with the full complement of ligatures. While the expert set includes old-style figures, Jenson’s “small caps and old-style figures” font is actually a better source for these glyphs, as it provides 40% more old-style-figures glyphs, including the percentage and sterling signs (£)!

KEPLER: MY FAVOURITE MULTIPLE-MASTER FONT

- ☛ As a three-axis multiple-master font, *Kepler*™ can render both **large** and tiny text with good readability, thanks to its *optical-size* axis, which allows subtle variations in the shape of the glyphs based on the size at which the font is set. Kepler also has a *width* axis, allowing you to set it in a range from condensed to extended, and a *weight* axis that can be used to adjust the weight of the font from light to **black**. These axes can be adjusted arbitrarily, allowing you to create such unlikely variants as light extended or **black condensed**.

VARIANTS

While proper SMALL CAPS are essential, it is also very useful to have *ITALIC SMALL CAPS* at our disposal. Both are available with Kepler.



Kepler also includes swash capitals, which can be useful when you want to set italic text with an extra flourish—compare “*The Quick Brown Fox & Royal Hound Eat Zebra Gammon With Yellow Mustard*” with the more pedestrian “*The Quick Brown Fox & Royal Hound Eat Zebra Gammon...*”

Finally, Kepler includes ornaments and an expert set, allowing you to set phrases such as “☛ Efficient shuffle buffers flagged 10,289 files ☛” with the full complement of ligatures. While the expert set includes old-style figures, Kepler’s “small caps and old-style figures” font is actually a better source for these glyphs, as it provides 40% more old-style-figures glyphs, including the percentage and sterling signs (£)!



Kepler’s ornaments come from three ornaments fonts, and supporting them presents a few challenges. There is no weight or width axis for the ornaments, only an optical size axis. Some ornaments are also unusually wide, requiring a little care when generating TFM files.

CRONOS: A SANS-SERIF TYPEFACE THAT CAN BE USED FOR BODY TEXT

- ☛ It can also be useful to have a high-quality sans-serif face at your disposal. This text is set in *Cronos*™, a rather non-traditional sans-serif font (similar to the lesser-known *Today Sans Serif*™).

Like Kepler, Cronos allows you to vary the weight of the type, from light to **bold**. Cronos also includes an optical-size axis to allow you to set small type that is still extremely readable. Unlike Kepler, Cronos does not include a width axis.



VARIANTS

- ☛ Cronos includes SMALL CAPS and *ITALIC SMALL CAPS* (both with old-style figures); swash capitals (“*The Quick Brown Fox & Royal Hound Eat Zebra Gammon With Yellow Mustard*”); an expert font with a complete set of ligatures (“Efficient shuffle buffers flagged 10,289 files.”); and a select few ornaments, ranging from the traditional ☛, through the fun ☞, to the scary ☠.

MINION: SEEMINGLY CONSERVATIVE, YET STYLISH

Minion™ is a widely respected multiple-master font, used to set Robert Bringhurst’s *The Elements of Typographic Style*. Minion is a three-axis multiple-master font, with a weight axis, allowing you to choose between, say, **bold** and **semi-bold**; a width axis, allowing you to choose how condensed your text is set; and, finally, an optical-size axis that helps make tiny type more readable. Minion does not have as much range for adjustment as Kepler, however—there is no Minion Black or Extended.

VARIANTS

Minion includes SMALL CAPS and *ITALIC SMALL CAPS*, both with old-style figures; swash capitals, as in “*The Quick Brown Fox & Royal Hound Eat Zebra Gammon With Yellow Mustard*”; ornaments (ranging from ☺ to ☼); and an expert set with ligatures—“Efficient shuffle buffers flagged 10,289 files”.

While it is usually preferable to use old-style figures with small caps (for text such as “v5A 1S9”), sometimes you may need to use titling figures instead (to typeset headings such as “THEOREM 5.9”).

Unlike Kepler’s swash font, Minion’s only includes the capital letters (in swash fonts, the lower case letters are identical to the italic lower-case letters). Neither approach is better; Minion saves space, whereas Kepler eases use. FontKit hides this inconsistency from the user.



MYRIAD: A GOOD COMPANION SANS-SERIF

Myriad™ works well with both Kepler and Minion. Myriad is a more conventional sans-serif typeface than Cronos, providing a strong contrast to a serified companion face, but perhaps a little less interest for extended text passages.

Myriad is a two-axis multiple-master font with a weight axis, ranging from light to **black**; and a width axis ranging from condensed to semi-extended. Myriad does not have an optical-size axis—it is best used at text sizes.

VARIANTS

Unfortunately, there are no expert fonts available for Myriad. There are no small caps, no expert set, no old-style figures; only roman and italic fonts.

Thankfully, we do not have to resign ourselves to living without SMALL CAPS and *ITALIC SMALL CAPS*. Because Myriad is a multiple-master font, we can produce our own small-caps font which looks good in print. Unlike the anemic “FAKE SMALL CAPS” you may see in some documents, *our* FAKE SMALL CAPS are correctly proportioned.

NUEVA: A FUNKY FONT

Sometimes it's nice to set type in a more unusual font. *Nueva*[™] is one such font—you can see that there's a good deal of character in its letterforms. Probably Nueva is better as a *display font* than a text font, but as you can see, you can set text with it if you like. Nueva is a two-axis multiple-master font with a weight axis, ranging from light, to **extra bold**; and a width axis ranging from condensed to extended.

VARIANTS

Unfortunately, there are no expert fonts available for Nueva. There are no small caps, no expert set, no old-style figures; only roman and italic fonts.

Thankfully, we do not have to resign ourselves to living without SMALL CAPS and *ITALIC SMALL CAPS*. Because Nueva is a multiple-master font, we can produce our own small-caps font which looks good in print. Unlike the anemic "FAKE SMALL CAPS" you may see in some documents, *our* FAKE SMALL CAPS are correctly proportioned.



TEKTON: WHEN "NEAT HANDWRITING" IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY

Sometimes you want a sans-serif font that looks like neat handwriting, especially if you're setting slides or marginal notes. Tekton is a two-axis multiple-master font with a weight axis, ranging from light to **black**; and a width axis ranging from condensed to extended. Usually the lighter side of Tekton's range works well in text, whereas slides usually demand a slightly bolder instance.

VARIANTS

Unfortunately, there are no expert fonts available for Tekton. There are no small caps, no expert set, no old-style figures; only roman and oblique fonts.

Thankfully, we do not have to resign ourselves to living without SMALL CAPS and *ITALIC SMALL CAPS*. Because Tekton is a multiple-master font, we can produce our own small-caps font which looks good in print. Unlike the anemic "FAKE SMALL CAPS" you may see in some documents, *our* FAKE SMALL CAPS are correctly proportioned.