

# Humanist San-serif Versus Grotesque San-serif

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## Abstract

Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, advances in printing techniques have led to a persistent use of roman serif types, due to their serifs' support of horizontal eye movement. With the rise of the Industrial Revolution, a bolder, more attention-grabbing typeface was needed. This led to the birth of many san-serif types during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A debate has transpired as to whether serif or san-serif types are more comfortable to read in continuous running text. Taking the serif – san-serif debate further, another question arises: Which san-serif types are more efficient and comfortable when reading continuous running text?

In visual communication design, the use of types and type choices are often discussed, but it is usually a designer's visual taste that influences the type choice they choose. Designers are often uncertain when choosing which san-serif types to use in continuous running text. This research aims to clarify those problems by analyzing two san-serif types: Humanist and Grotesque. These two typefaces were chosen because of their structural similarities and differences among other san-serif categories. Geometric and Contrast san-serif types will be excluded due to their individualistic qualities. This thesis will discuss the historic evolution of Humanist and Grotesque types through a comparison investigation. A survey study of librarians and editors was conducted to identify their preference for performances between the Humanist and Grotesque types in order to clarify the use of Humanist and Grotesque san-serif types.