

Proportional width

Proportional width refers to the character width of a letter based on its shape and design. For example, the letter i has a narrow width, and the letter w has a wide width. Except at justified margins, characters on successive lines will not necessarily line up with those above and below.

Monospaced refers to characters that have the same width value. In this type of font, the letters i and w have the same width, making it necessary to extend the i and condense the w to keep spacing consistent.

Typewriters are the primary users of monospace typefaces, though some computer fonts also use them. They are usually ten characters per inch (called *pica*) or twelve characters to the inch (called *elite*).

The monospace typefaces exist nowadays mostly for novelty reasons. They are generally used for initials. There are also fonts (some monospaced and some proportional) that simulate the look of a typewriter.

This is an example of a monospaced font. Notice that each letter has the same width to it.

Courier, a monospaced font.

Lines and leaders

Lines and leaders are a series of periods or short dashes, evenly spaced, that guide a reader's eye across the page from one element to another. The dots come in varying weights, ranging from fine, light dots to heavy, bold dots.

Today the period is the most used leader. Simple periods are not always the best choice, though. A period of a smaller point size may optically look better than one of the same size as the rest of the type.