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Aa Oo

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Old Style (i.e. Garamond Old Style)

- Letters are open, rounded and wide
- Serifs are bracketed (the bracket is the part of the letter that connects stroke to serif)
- There is little contrast between the thick and thin strokes of the letters (see this on an u/c 'A' for example)
- There is noticeable stress in the rounded letters (such as the letter 'o'; if you draw a line from the thinnest part of the letter at the top through the counter and down through the thinnest part of the letter at the bottom, the line would be diagonal)

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Transitional (i.e. Baskerville)

- Letters appear more refined in comparison to Old Style
- Serifs have more refined, less heavy brackets
- There is more contrast between thick and thin strokes of the letters
- There is less stress in the rounded letters (the diagonal line is less diagonal)

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Modern (i.e. Bodoni)

- Letters have hairline serifs with no brackets. Rather, the stroke meets the serif at an angle
- Letters have extreme contrast between thick and thin strokes
- There is no stress in the rounded letters (no diagonal, but a straight line top to bottom through the thinnest part)

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Slab Serif (Rockwell, Stymie)

- Less contrast between the thick and thin parts of the letters, although letters are usually very thick. In some typefaces, the strokes are all the same width.
- Some faces have bracketed serifs, some have serifs at right angles to the strokes, but all serifs are very very thick, heavy slabs
- some faces (those that are not of uniform width) have stress in the rounded letters

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Sans Serif (Helvetica, Futura)

- No serifs!
- Usually uniform weight in the letterforms.

Typeface examples are 48pt, Top to bottom; Garamond, Baskerville, Bodoni, Rockwell, Futura