

MD Primer

MD Primer is a digital reinterpretation of the flaws and inconsistencies of early grotesque typefaces, inspired by a range of both European and American designs produced in the late 19th Century. While these typefaces were produced by skilled craftspeople working for established foundries, at the time of their production the sans-serif style had yet to settle into the rhythms and traditions we're familiar with today.

The result was a diverse range of grotesques which, though well-made, to the modern eye seem somewhat naïve and unrefined. The proportions were often strange by the standards of today; the difference in weight between upper and lowercase more pronounced; shapes which in contemporary typefaces are usually harmonious would frequently appear very different from one another.

It's this era of early sans-serif designs, most of which have never been available in digital formats, that MD Primer is based on. Rather than faithfully reproducing any single design, the typeface reflects several — reducing or accentuating elements from them to better fit contemporary usage, while still referring to the source material in character.

The name of the typeface also reflects these distinctly analogue origins. *Long Primer* and *Great Primer* were both names given to sizes of metal type (around 10pt and 18pt, respectively), before the introduction of the numeric point size.

No. 49. Corps 48. 8 A, ca. 10 Ko.

CONSERVEN

△ Halbbreite Groteske-Versalien (Benjamin Krebs Nachfolger, ~1889)

36 POINT 4 A \$3 90

**CONJURED
HARBORING**

△ Interchangeable Gothic (Marder, Luse & Co., ~1889)

Barmen

△ Boldface Gothic No. 13 (James Conner's Sons, mid-1800s; here Bauer'sche Gießerei, ~1915)

**CONSERVEN
Barmen Gorge**

△ MD Primer Semibold

MD Primer Light

MD Primer Regular

MD Primer Medium

MD Primer Semibold

MD Primer Bold

MD Primer Black

MD Primer is available in six discrete weights, from Light to Black. The letterspacing is consistent across this weight range (though naturally slightly narrower in the bolder styles), and is overall marginally tighter than would be encountered in the original 19th-century references.

Although the effect is less pronounced than in some of the reference material, the uppercase of MD Primer is somewhat bolder (and indeed wider) than the lowercase. This is most visible in the boldest styles, and more subtle towards the regular and light weights.

JUNGLE BOLDER

CYCADS £1,281.50

425 & 39 SAMPLE

Imperfect Olympiad

Ascender Readable

90 pt

Light

90 pt

Regular

VIOLETS RESCUE

A38 N. → KERNED

LANCER CA. 1892

Jewellery Peregrine

Literature Threaded

90 pt

Medium

90 pt

Semibold

EAST 25 HERALD
CAESAR SCREEN
MUNICH £2,101.78
Hydrogen Foundries
Universes Mercurial

90 pt

Bold

90 pt

Black

120 pt

BRINK COMMUNICATE

Effectively By Use

48 pt

32 pt

Produced by the Bauer'sche Gießerei, Frankfurt am Main, between 19

12 pt

3 MAY. BISTRITZ. — LEFT MUNICH AT 8:35 P.M., on 1st May, arriving at Vienna early next morning; should have arrived at 6:46, but train was an hour late. Buda-Pesth seems a wonderful place, from the glimpse which I got of it from the train and the little I could walk through the streets. I feared to go very far from the station, as we had arrived late and would start as near the correct time as possible. The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East; the most western of splendid bridges over the Danube, which is here of noble width and depth, took us among the traditions of Turkish rule. We left in pretty good time, and came after nightfall to Klausenburgh. Here I stopped for the night at the Hotel Royale. I had for dinner, or rather supper, a chicken done up some way with red pepper, which was very good but thirsty. (Mem., get recipe for Mina.) I asked the waiter, and he said it was called

10 pt (+4u tracking)

IT WAS A BRIGHT COLD DAY IN APRIL, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him. The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who

8 pt (+10u tracking)

YOU WILL REJOICE TO HEAR THAT no disaster has accompanied the commencement of an enterprise which you have regarded with such evil forebodings. I arrived here yesterday, and my first task is to assure my dear sister of my welfare and increasing confidence in the success of my undertaking. I am already far north of London, and as I walk in the streets of Petersburg, I feel a cold northern breeze play upon my cheeks, which braces my nerves and fills me with delight. Do you understand this feeling? This breeze, which has travelled from the regions towards which I am advancing, gives me a foretaste of those icy climes. Inspirited by this wind of promise, my daydreams become more fervent and vivid. I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight. There, Margaret, the sun is for ever visible, its broad disk just skirting the horizon and diffusing a perpetual splendour. There—for with your leave, my sister, I will put some trust in preceding navigators—there snow and frost are banished; and, sailing over a calm sea,

120 pt

Glacier

48 pt

PARADIGMATIC
Instant Ramen 91

32 pt

Also carried by Haas'sche Gießerei, Basel, under the name 'Breite Fett

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120 pt

LOGIC

48 pt

NEO—GROTESK
Koninklijke Stallen

32 pt

Possibly based on Gothic No. 545 (MacKellar, 1889) — itself based on

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Shuttle

48 pt

DÜSSELDORF'S
Printed & Typeset

32 pt

‘BOLDFACE GOTHIC No. 13’ (1900) — James Conner’s Sons; also by

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RIDGE MANUFACTURE

Digital Production

48 pt

32 pt

The earlier designs were likely imported from elsewhere, whereas some

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Bought METRO 16 EAST Aeronautical Corp

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32 pt

Although the punchcutter behind this design cannot be determined, the

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Uppercase

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Lowercase

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Punctuation

.,:;...!|?¿·▪*#/\(){}[]--—_”',,”“”‘’«»<>

Symbols

@ & ¶ § © ® ™ ° | ¡ † ‡

Math Symbols

+ - × ÷ = ≠ > < ~ ^ %

Currency

f ¢ \$ € £ ¥

Arrows

↑ ↗ → ↘ ↓ ↙ ← ↲ ↔ ↕

Diacritics

¨ ˆ ˇ ˘ ˙ ˚ ˛ ˜ ˘ - ˙ ˚

SS01
Single-story g

Egret

Egret

SS02
Single-story a

Halcyon

Halcyon

SS03
Notched 1

1891

1891

SS04
Straight-tailed j

Rijswijk

Rijswijk

Case-sensitive forms

iH! ¿H?

iH! ¿H?

Discretionary ligature IJ

RIJKS

RUKS

Ordinals

1a 1o

1^a 1^o

Supported Languages

Afrikaans	Hungarian	Malay	Slovenian
Albanian	Icelandic	Manx	Soga
Asu	Ido	Maori	Somali
Basque	Inari Sami	Morisyen	South Ndebele
Bemba	Indonesian	North Ndebele	Southern Sotho
Bena	Interlingua	Northern Sotho	Spanish
Bosnian	Irish	Norwegian Bokmål	Swahili
Catalan	Italian	Norwegian Nynorsk	Swati
Cebuano	Javanese	Nyanja	Swedish
Chiga	Jju	Nyankole	Swiss German
Colognian	Jola-Fonyi	Occitan	Taita
Cornish	Kabuverdianu	Oromo	Taroko
Corsican	Kalaallisut	Polish	Teso
Croatian	Kalenjin	Portuguese	Tsonga
Czech	Kinyarwanda	Romanian	Tswana
Danish	Kurdish	Romansh	Turkish
Dutch	Latvian	Rombo	Turkmen
English	Lithuanian	Rundi	Upper Sorbian
Estonian	Lojban	Rwa	Vunjo
Faroese	Low German	Samburu	Walloon
Filipino	Lower Sorbian	Sangó	Welsh
Finnish	Luo	Sangu	Western Frisian
French	Luxembourgish	Sardinian	Wolof
Friulian	Luyia	Scottish Gaelic	Xhosa
Galician	Machame	Sena	Zulu
Ganda	Makhuwa-Meetto	Shambala	
German	Makonde	Shona	
Gusii	Malagasy	Slovak	

Details

Designed By	Rutherford Craze
Version	1.000
Released	May 2021
Styles	6
Glyphs	376
Formats	OTF, WOFF, WOFF2
Credits	Hero artwork by Tom Benford. With particular thanks to Dan Reynolds for generously sharing his database of 19th-century sans-serif designs, as well as several articles on the same topic. Thanks also to Luke Charsley and Céline Hurka for their feedback and expertise during the design process. Halbbreite Grotteske-Versalien and Boldface Gothic No. 13 scans (p.2): Dan Reynolds, 'Database of sans serifs sold in 19th-century Germany', TypeOff.de (last accessed 11 May 2021). Interchangeable Gothic scan (p.2) courtesy of HathiTrust (www.hathitrust.org).
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