

Easy for you to say

*A Pronunciation Guide to Type's Top
Tongue-Twisters*

You may know your ascenders up one side and down the other. You may know how to kern letter pairs so closely they should be engaged, or at least formally introduced. Your word spacing may have the measured cadence and grace of a musical score. But what if you can't pronounce the name of the typeface you're using?

Nothing to be embarrassed about. There are quite a few typefaces that defy sounding-out, and even more type aficionados who don't have a clue as to how to go about forming syllable number one. In the interest of both, we enthusiastically present this homage to the diphthong, this opus of elocution, this accentuation of the positive, this pronunciation guide for the names of hard-to-say typefaces and their creators. Enjoy.

No-vahr-ay-zay

Text: ITC Novarese Book

Of all the modern type designers, Aldo Novarese [Ahl-doh No-vahr-ay-zay] or [ˈaldo novaˈreːze] is perhaps one of the most prolific. In a career that spans half a century and includes such undertakings as woodcarving, etching, lithography, writing, painting, teaching and type design, Novarese somehow found the time and energy to create a monumental body of work: 76 typefaces with 218 separate weights among them.

One of those typefaces bears his name and is perhaps the most popular, ITC Novarese. It pays homage to ancient roman letterforms and has the distinct feel of chiseled stone capitals from the second century B.C. Use it to add a stately, solid feel to reports, banners and headlines.

Feh-nee-chey

Then there's ITC Fenice [Feh-nee-chey] or [feˈniːtʃe]. It's a Novarese creation that owes its modern heritage to Bodoni [Boh-doh-nee] or [boˈdoːni], a modern family of typefaces. Both ITC Novarese and ITC Fenice are distinctly roman typefaces, but from different points in time. And probably not immediately pronounceable by those who don't at least have a little Etruscan blood in their veins.

Text: ITC Fenice Light

Noh-fret

Moving across the Mediterranean for typefaces with an Egyptian flair, we find Nofret [Noh-fret] or [noːfret], or The Beautiful One in ancient Egyptian. Even though it has a very old name, Nofret is a very modern typeface, released for the first time in 1984 by the Berthold [Bare-told] or [ˈbeɪtɔlt] foundry. It was designed by Gudrun Zapf von Hesse [Good-ruhn tsapf vohn Hess-uh] or [ˈguːdʁuːn ˈtsapf fɔn ˌhesə], who had created two other Egyptian-style typefaces shortly after World War II. Nofret is different, however, in that it reflects our modern passion for the thin and stylish. Use Nofret on projects that require a modern, calligraphic feel, like invitations and announcements.

Text: Nofret Light

Koh-shan

Speaking of stylish, you can thank the French for Cochin [Koh-shan] or [koʃɛ̃], which was first released in the early 1900s by the French printers and type founders, Deberny [De-bear-nie] or [dəbɛrˈni] & Peignot. Named for the 19th-century printer Nicholas Cochin, this is an elegant typeface with long ascenders, and is so popular, every major type house today offers at least one version of it.

Text: Cochin Regular

Pay-nyoh

ANOTHER typeface to come out of DEBERNY & PEIGNOT is PEIGNOT [Pay-nyoh] or [peˈno], first printed in 1937 and the creation of typographic pioneer EXTRAORDINAIRE, A.M. CASSANDRE [Cah-sahn-dr] or [kaˈsɑːdr].

CASSANDRE WAS AN EXPERIMENTER, and his design for PEIGNOT is unique in that it's a biform typeface, that is, a mixture of modified small caps and lowercase letters making up the lowercase. In fact, it seems CASSANDRE regarded lowercase letters as somehow inferior. "I remain unflinchingly loyal to uppercase letters," he said. "The lowercase letter is in my opinion merely a manual distortion of the monumental letter—an abbreviation, a cursive alteration introduced by copyists." Understandably, there are only five lowercase letters in PEIGNOT's alphabet. But PEIGNOT is ideal for posters and packaging, where it will instantly evoke the mood of France in the 1940s. C'est la vie.

Text: Peignot Light

Pop-l-Pon-te-fex

Across the Rhine in Germany, another modern type designer, Friedrich Poppl [Freed-rick Pop-l] or [ˈfʁiːdʁɪç ˈpɔpl] was taking a very different approach. First and foremost a calligrapher, Poppl understood the difference between the spontaneity of the brush or pen and the controlled repetition of set type. So while his calligraphic creations are free-flowing, his typefaces, particularly Poppl-Pontifex [Pon-te-fex] or [ˈpɔntɪfɛks], are smooth and restrained, clearly reflecting Poppl's belief that the pen is not necessarily mightier, but simply different.

Pop-l-Reh-ze-denz

For a hint of Poppl's calligraphic expertise, look at Poppl-Residenz [Reh-ze-denz] or [ˈʁezɪdɛnts], a Spencerian style script that adds grace and tradition to formal announcements and invitations.

Text: Poppl-Pontifex Regular

All ten of Friedrich Poppl's typefaces were produced by Berthold, one of the world's great type houses, under the exacting direction of its most famous maestro, Günter Gerhard Lange [Goon-ter Gare-hart Lahn-guh] or ['gvntə 'geehaet 'larə]. During his long tenure as Berthold's type director, Lange produced hundreds of typefaces, working with the very best designs from every age.

One of the fairly recent designs he produced was that of Berthold Walbaum [Vahl-bouwm] or

Sah-bon

Here's a typeface that was designed for both metal typesetting and phototypesetting. It was created by the great German writer, teacher and typographic revolutionary, Jan Tschichold [Yahn Chi-shold] or ['ja:n 'ʃɪçɔlt]. In the 1960s, Tschichold was approached by three type houses: Stempel, Monotype and Linotype, who asked him for a typeface they could release jointly, but which would reproduce faithfully under the special conditions each technology imposed. Sabon [sah-bon] or [sa'bɔ] was the result, an elegant typeface that traces its heritage back to the type styles of Claude Garamond and Robert Granjon [Roh-ber Gran-john] or [rɔ'be:ʁ ɡʁɑ̃'ʒɔ̃]. Use this classic typeface for applications ranging from book design to corporate identity.

Text: Sabon Roman

ITC Weidemann [Vy-de-mun] or [vaedəman] is also a typeface that was designed for a specific purpose. Originally called Biblica, the typeface was commissioned in 1982 by the German Biblical Society for a new German translation of the Bible. To execute the design, the Society approached Stuttgart University graphic arts and communications professor, Kurt Weidemann.

One of the restrictions placed on Weidemann's design was that the text had

Vahl-bouwm

Text: Berthold Walbaum Book Regular

[valbaom]. This typeface got its name from its creator, Justus Erich Walbaum [Yus-tus Eh-rik Vahl-bouwm] or ['justus 'ʔe:ɪɪç 'valbaom], who engraved the typeface for his own foundry in the early 1800s.

During that century, Walbaum was used to set some of Germany's most beautiful and beloved writing. It seems that its alternating thick and thin strokes make it particularly elegant and expressive for the setting of poetry. Lange released several weights of the typeface, having redrawn them to compensate for the limitations of phototype-setting, in 1975.

Vel-yo-vitch

Jovica Veljović [Yo-veetzah Vel-yo-vitch] or ['jovitsa 'veljovitɕ] is another league leader in the impossible-to-pronounce name category. Like many type masters both ancient and modern, Veljović is a calligrapher, and a highly honored one at that. His work has been exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and at the ITC Center in New York City. His talent is also readily apparent in his type designs.

ITC Veljovic is a strong, lively typeface with energetic weight stress and flaired terminals. The italics are particularly dynamic. Yet the letters exhibit more of the precision of those cut from stone rather than those drawn in ink. This versatile text typeface will add vitality to even the most mundane report or proposal.

Text: ITC Veljovic Book

Vy-de-mun

Text: ITC Weidemann Book

to be set in two narrow columns. To ensure maximum readability in that format, Professor Weidemann set out to design a typeface with a large x-height, even strokes and a narrow set width. The large x-height made the letters legible at small point sizes, the even strokes gave the type good color while minimizing show-through on the fine paper, and the narrow set width compressed the 4,500,000 characters of the Bible enough to save over 200 pages. ITC was so impressed with Biblica, the foundry licensed and released it in 1985, changing the name to honor its creator. ITC Weidemann's proportions make it the choice for text-intensive projects.

Es-pree

Veljović's second typeface, ITC Esprit [Es-pree] or [e'spri] shares the same calligraphic heritage as ITC Veljovic, but is more restrained in its expression. The calligrapher's playfulness is more subtle, and the smile is hidden behind a classic exterior. For instance, in most type families, the italic is more fluid than the roman, whereas with ITC Esprit, the reverse is true. Overall, this typeface shows hints of Venetian Oldstyle design that should work well in a variety of applications from advertising to packaging.

Text: ITC Esprit Book

Stohn Foh-neh-tik*

Finally, we'd like to leave you with something you can use to decipher whatever mysteries of pronunciation you may run across: Stone Phonetic [Stohn Foh-neh-tik] or ['staʊn fə'neɪk], which has appeared in brackets throughout this article. Designed by Adobe's John Renner as a companion to ITC Stone Sans and ITC Stone Serif, Stone Phonetic sports more than 300 linguistic symbols used by the International Phonetic Association. So there isn't much you won't be able to parse out.

Text: ITC Stone Serif

*To work correctly, all phonetic fonts require an application that accesses kerning information.

By this time, though, you may be wondering where we got our own name. Adobe [Ah-doh-bee] or [ə'doːbi] is the name of the usually dry creek that runs behind the Northern California homes of our founders, Charles Geschke [Gesh-key] or ['gɛʃki] and John Warnock [War-nok] or ['wɑːnɔk]. The other factor that made Adobe a suitable moniker for their young company was that it had none of the Qs, Xs, Ys and Zs so popular with so many high-tech companies.

Of course, all of the typefaces in the Adobe Type Library are not as difficult to say as those we've featured here. But with more than 1,500 typefaces to choose from, we hope you'll not only find our name easy to say, but easy to remember as well.

Text: Myriad

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