

# The *invisible Power* of UI Typography

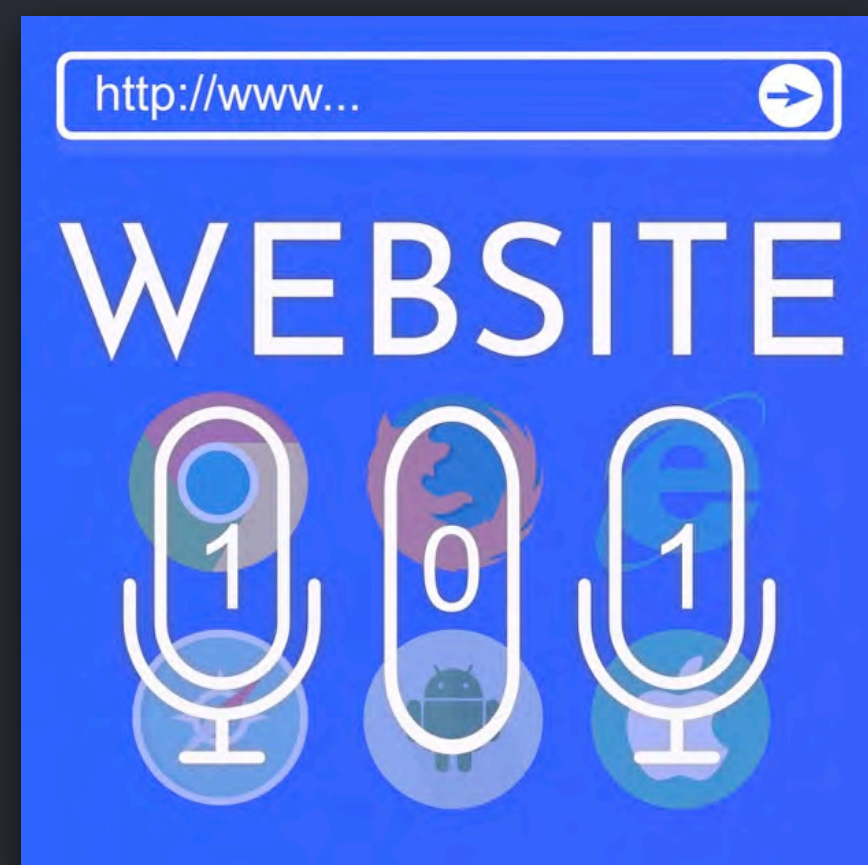
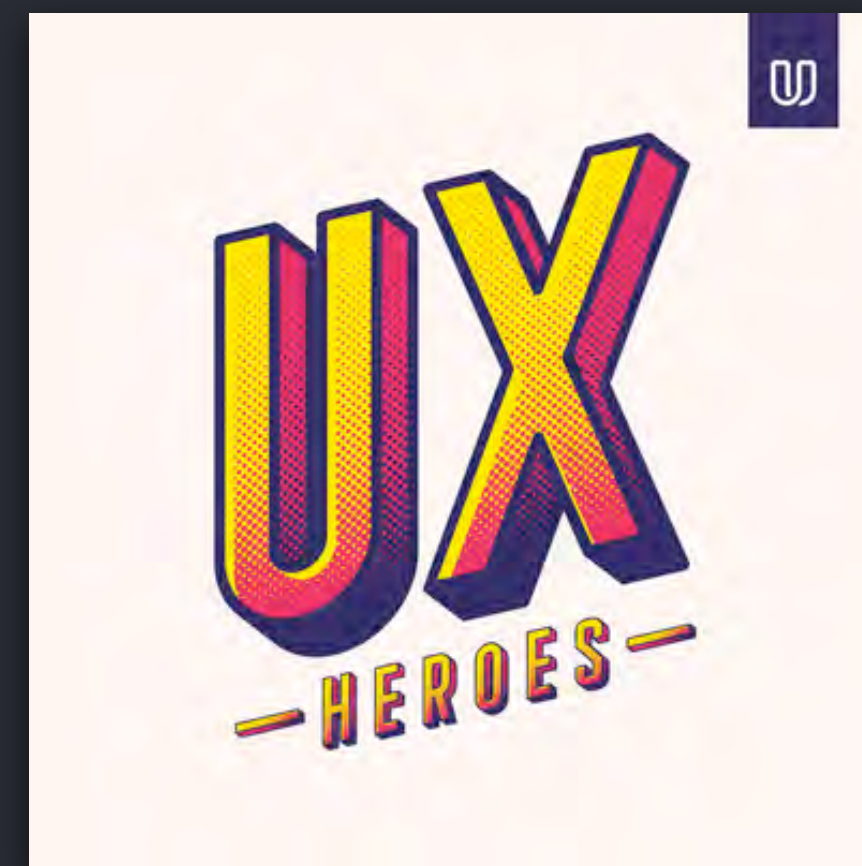
# Oliver Schöndorfer

UI Designer  Typographer



Teaching you how to *boost* your  
designs with pimped type.

# Guesting at *podcasts*



# Pairing typefaces using the font matrix

The following guest article was written by Oliver Schöndorfer\*

Background reading:

[Pairing typefaces by the same type designer or type foundry](#)

The single biggest challenge we face when [pairing type](#) is choosing a secondary [typeface](#) that's different enough from our primary choice, but not too different, as described in our article "[Pairing typefaces](#)." This can be a challenge, because it's not always clear where the similarities and the differences should lie.

In this article, we want to share with you the concept of the font matrix—an approach based on the work of typography professor [Indra Kupferschmid](#). Understanding it can change your perception of type and give you a framework to make better decisions when pairing typefaces.

Please bear in mind that combining type is not a science with hard and fast rules. It's a creative discipline and you can do whatever you think feels right for your project. Take the ideas shared in this article as guidelines to make your own decisions in the great adventure of pairing type.

## The problem with the current models for classifying type

### Topics in this article

[Choosing type](#)

[Pairing type](#)

### Essential terms



#### Axis (in type design)

The angle of the "pen" in a letterform, usually implied by the contrast of a stroke.

out without with  
without without with

*Expert*  
guest author



#typography

## Font Matrix – See and Pair Typefaces Like Never Before



**Pimp my Type**  
3320 Abonnenten

Abonniert



187



Teilen



Clip



Speichern



1833 Aufrufe vor 6 Monaten

👉 Pairing Typefaces like a Pro – Online Course:

<https://pairingtype.pro>

Mehr ansehen

Chatwiedergabe anzeigen

Alle

Aus deiner Suche

Kürzlich hochgeladen



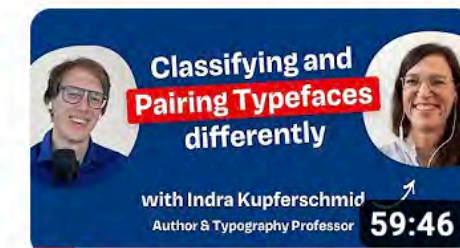
**Check these 5 things before choosing a font – Font Follow...**

Pimp my Type  
1256 Aufrufe • vor 1 Jahr



**My Tech Hot Takes!**

Marques Brownlee ✓  
1,6 Mio. Aufrufe • vor 1 Tag  
Neu



**Classifying & Pairing Typefaces with Indra Kupferschmid**

Pimp my Type  
565 Aufrufe • vor 6 Monaten



**Body Text – How to Choose a Proper Typeface?**

Pimp my Type  
2914 Aufrufe • vor 1 Jahr



**Wer in Deutschland gegen trans Menschen hetzt | ZDF Magazi...**

ZDF MAGAZIN ROYALE ✓  
1,3 Mio. Aufrufe • vor 3 Tagen  
Neu



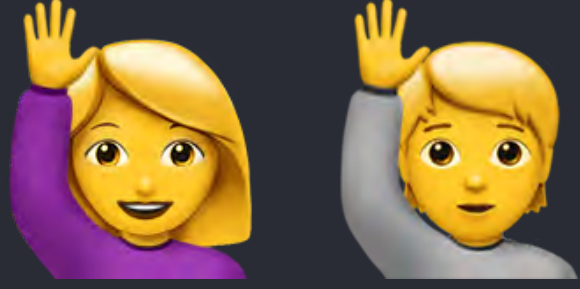
**Das Mobilisierungs-Desaster: Wie Putin seine Propagandiste...**

ARTEde ✓  
637.463 Aufrufe • vor 2 Wochen



**Font Follows Feeling – A brief type classification and the...**

Pimp my Type  
2927 Aufrufe • vor 1 Jahr



## I'm here because ...

- 1 *I'm newer to the topic,* and want to level up.
- 2 *I'm experienced,* and want some more tools in my belt.
- 3 *I'm a typography pro,* and could always use a few more tips.
- 4 *Typography is the best way,* to cope with food coma.



How can you make  
*typography work* for you?



It's *only a little text!*

**What difference does it make?**





LinkedIn  
Sales Navigator





What are you looking for?



★★★★★



★★★★★

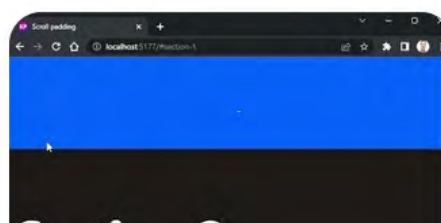
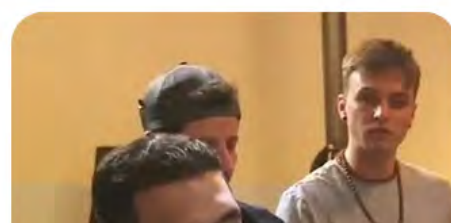
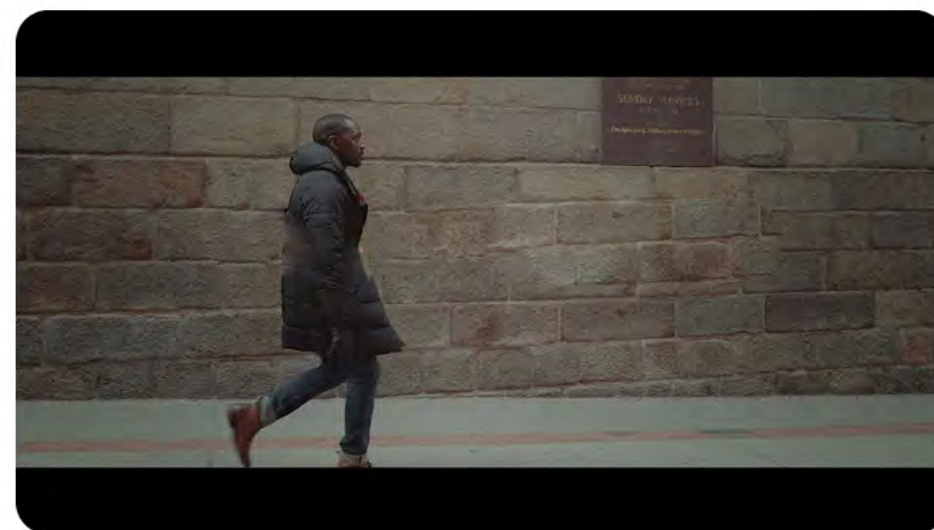
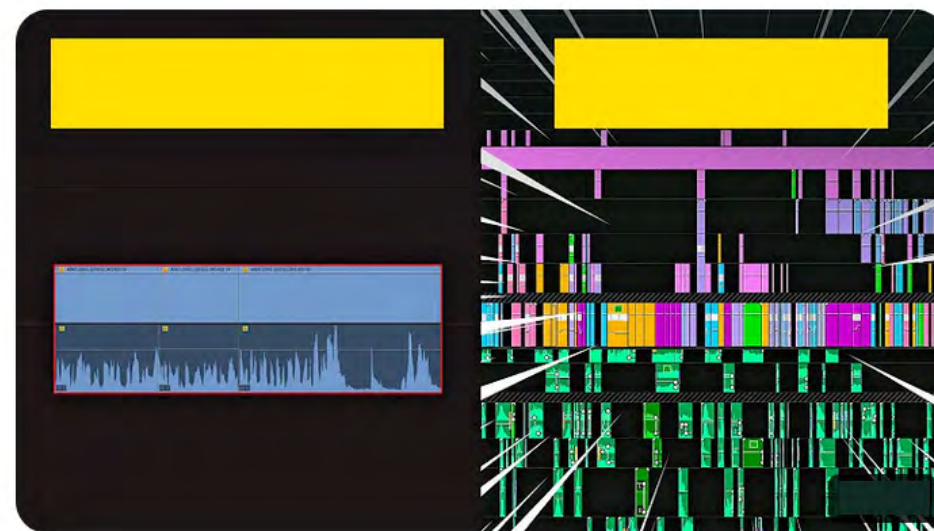
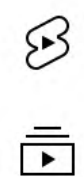
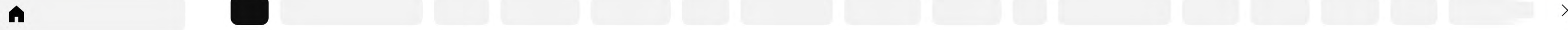


★★★★☆



★★★★★





*When Typography  
becomes brutally  
VISIBLE*



Bitte seien Sie achtsam!

Gestern

[English Version](#)

Geben Sie nur die Aufträge frei, die Sie selbst angelegt haben und tatsächlich auch durchführen wollen. Wir werden Sie niemals telefonisch zur Freigabe von (Echtzeit-)Überweisungen oder zur Stornierung von Aufträgen auffordern.

[Aktuelle Phishing-Beispiele](#)

[Mehr erfahren](#)

Ihr Internetbanking-Team

Nachricht gelesen

[Abmelden](#)



# Too light text

☰

Menü

👤

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🔍

Suche

SCHLADMING  
DACHSTEIN

Tagesskipässe

Mehrtageskipässe

Einzelfahrte

Tagesskipässe

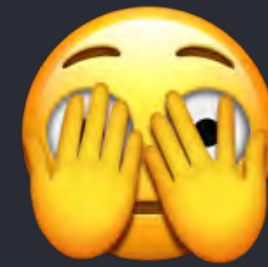
Ski amadé: Nebensaison Start & Finale  
bis 23.12.2022 und ab 18.03.2023

Tagesskipässe Ski amadé  
bis 23.12.2022 und ab 18.03.2023  
Hauser Kaibling, Planai,  
Hochwurzen, Reiteralp,  
Dachstein Gletscher, Skiregion  
Ramsau, Galsterberg und  
Fageralm

→

Erwachsene




Online-Frühbucher-Preis





Inappropriate typefaces

www.elga-online.gv.at/w...

EBP-S1810.02.2023, 16:27 Uhr



Mein e-Impfpass



PDF anzeigen

SARS-CoV-2 (Corona)

7.Okt 2022

BA4/5

10x6

(5516866)

Impfstoff: COMIRNATY

Dosis: 3, SARS-CoV-2

Grundschema, Comirnaty

Notruf: NÖ GmbH Dr. Zsuzsanna Fluch

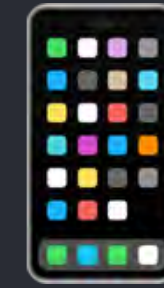
Impf

Zusätzliche Informationen

Um PDF-Dokumente betrachten zu können, benötigen Sie einen [PDF-Reader](#).



# Typographic rampage



The interface *is* the product.

**Shape**

**Content**

**Function**

**Type**

*We belong together*

Style Script by Robert Leuschke

*We belong together*

Banshee by Tim Donaldson

**Font choice**

**Sizes**

**Success**

**Personality**

**Hierarchy**

**Accessibility**

**Spacing**

**Contrast**





**Font choice**

**Hierarchy**

**Sizes Contrast Spacing**



Personality  
Accessibility  
Successful

## Overview



€ 6,753.54  
Current Balance

Send Money

Add Money

### Earlier this week

The Grocery King  
13 Mar  
–€ 128.84

Cinema Paradiso Baden  
12 Mar  
–€ 12.80

YT Ad Revenue  
12 Mar  
€ 2,235.43

### Earlier this month

The Bakery Around the Corner  
08 Mar  
–€ 3.20

Erich Spickermann  
05 Mar  
€ 20.50

### February

Super Type Foundry  
27 Feb  
–€ 150.00

Overview



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27 Feb

# Font Choice





Good afternoon

Roboto



Good afternoon

Titilium Web



Good afternoon

Ubuntu

Pick the right category



Sans



Slab



Serif

# Strokes are even with little contrast



calm

Nunito  
Very even strokes



calm

Right Grotesk  
Contrasting ink traps



calm

Playfair Display  
Too contrasting

# Letter shapes are open

~

esca

Inter  
Quite closed shapes

✓

esca

Fira Sans  
Very open shapes

×

esca

Neue Helvetica  
Closed shapes

**Letter shapes are open**

The image shows the lowercase letters 'e', 's', 'c', and 'a' in a white, sans-serif font. Blue dots are placed on the letters to highlight their 'open' shapes: one dot on the left side of the 'e', one on the left side of the 's', one on the top right of the 's', one on the left side of the 'c', one on the right side of the 'c', and one on the top right of the 'a'.

esca

Fira Sans is more legible  
in small sizes

The image shows the lowercase letters 'e', 's', 'c', and 'a' in a white, sans-serif font. Blue dots are placed on the letters to highlight their 'open' shapes: one dot on the left side of the 'e', one on the top right of the 's', one on the left side of the 'c', one on the right side of the 'c', and one on the top right of the 'a'.

esca

Neue Helvetica is harder  
to read in small sizes

# Letterforms are easy to distinguish



I l 1

IBM Plex Sans  
very distinct characters



l l l

Gill Sans  
All the same shapes



l l 1

SF Pro  
More disitinct

# Exercise #1

# Open the exercises in Figma

1. Go to **[pimpmytype.com/uxc](https://pimpmytype.com/uxc)**
2. Follow the link the Figma file
3. Get a copy

# #1

## Font Choice

🕒 10 min

1. Go to [Google Fonts](#)
2. Type in the sample text ***1 Ill Escape***
3. Pick two **candidates**
4. **Try them out** in the app design
5. **Decide** on a typeface

① Megatypos

② Megatypos

③ Megatypos

④ Megatypos

⑤ Megatypos

1 Megatypos

Quicksand is too striking

2 Megatypos

Rubik might work

3 Megatypos

Newsreader is too constrasting

4 Megatypos

Mona Sans might work

5 Megatypos

Oswald is too dense and dark

# Rubik

## Overview



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# Mona Sans

## Overview



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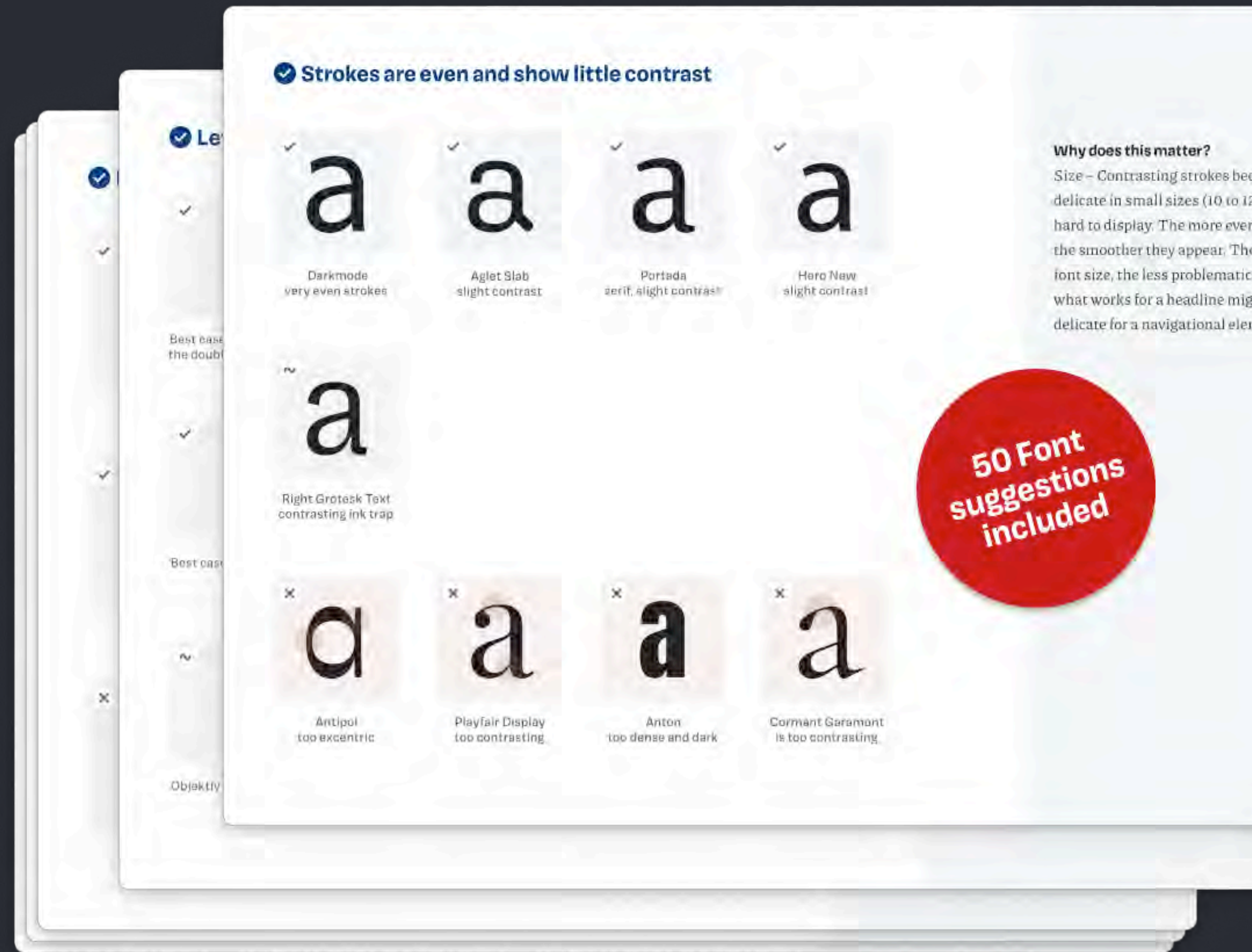
Super Type Foundry  
27 Feb  
-€ 150.00

# Font Choice

- Interesting enough but *not distracting*
- *Sans-serif* or slab serif typefaces
- *Mood fits* the project
- It has *even strokes* and little contrast
- *Open shapes* and distinct characters
- *Licensing* and technical conditions work

# UI Fonts Checklist

## Special offer later



# Hierarchy



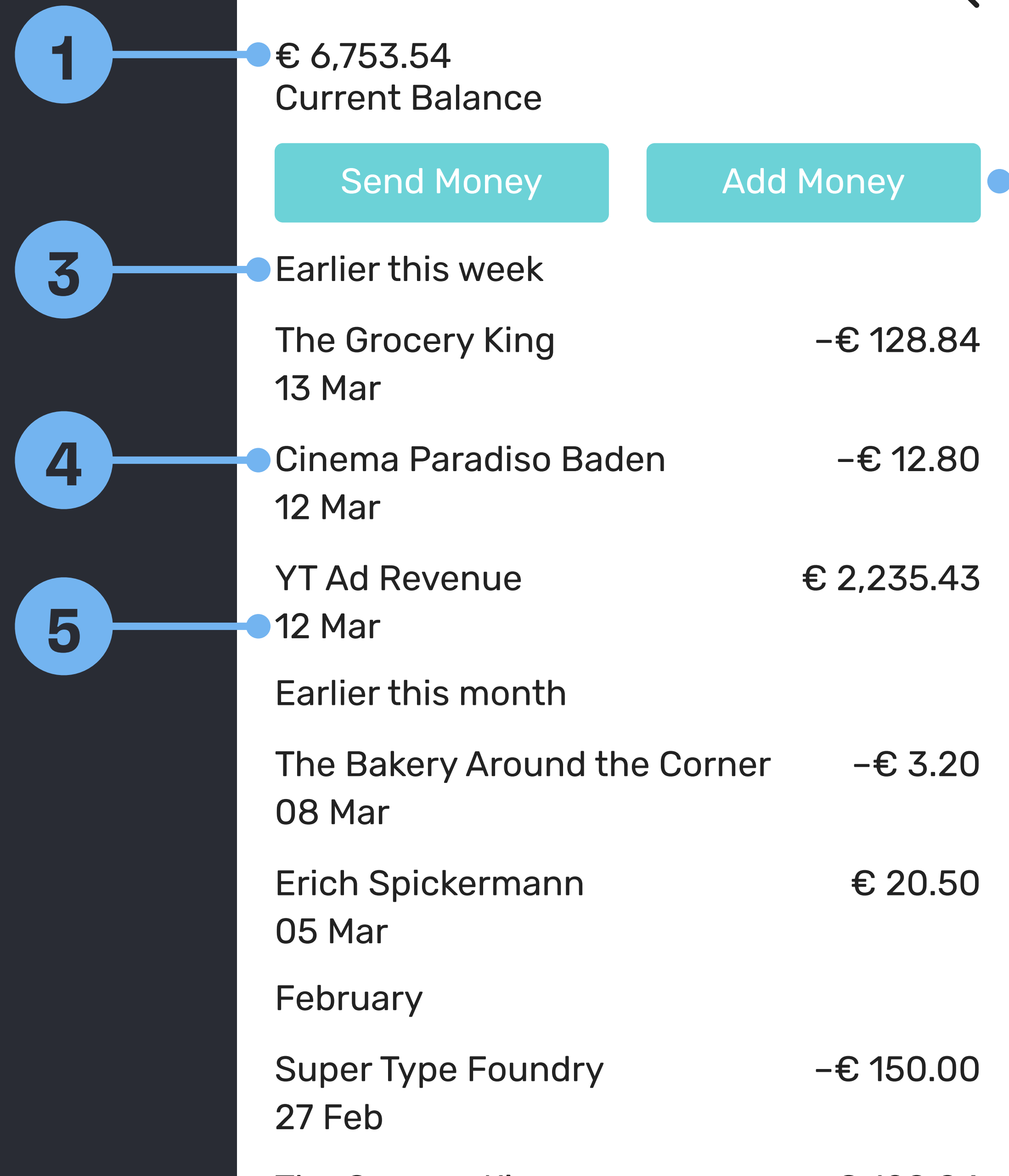
**Which Hierarchies?**

Overview	
€ 6,753.54 Current Balance	
Send Money	Add Money
Earlier this week	
The Grocery King 13 Mar	-€ 128.84
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YT Ad Revenue 12 Mar	€ 2,235.43
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February	
Super Type Foundry 27 Feb	-€ 150.00



What is *most important*  
in this view?

# Hierarchy levels



Overview		🔍
€ 6,753.54		
Current Balance		
<div>Send Money</div>		<div>Add Money</div>
Earlier this week		
The Grocery King	–€ 128.84	
13 Mar		
Cinema Paradiso Baden	–€ 12.80	
12 Mar		
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12 Mar		
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08 Mar		
Erich Spickermann	€ 20.50	
05 Mar		
February		
Super Type Foundry	–€ 150.00	
27 Feb		

# Hierarchy

## by size & weight

17 pt (body)  
15–17 pt are ideal

34 pt  
Regular

17 pt  
SemiBold

Overview

€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

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The Grocery King

13 Mar

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05 Mar

€ 20.50

February

Super Type Foundry

27 Feb

–€ 150.00

17 pt (body)  
15–17 pt are ideal

Hierarchy  
by size & weight

# Hierarchy by size & weight

15 pt  
Regular

14 pt  
Regular

Overview

Q

€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

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13 Mar

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05 Mar

€ 20.50

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Super Type Foundry

27 Feb

–€ 150.00

The Grocery King

13 Mar

–€ 128.84

#003471

## Overview



€ 6,753.54

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Add Money

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13 Mar  
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08 Mar  
-€ 3.20

Erich Spickermann  
05 Mar  
€ 20.50

### February

Super Type Foundry  
27 Feb  
-€ 150.00

#222222

# Hierarchy by color

#80888F

Overview

€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

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Erich Spickermann

05 Mar

€ 20.50

February

Super Type Foundry

27 Feb

–€ 150.00

The Grocery King

26 Feb

–€ 128.84

! a11y alert !

#80888F

Overview



€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

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Earlier this week

The Grocery King	-€ 128.84
13 Mar	
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12 Mar	

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08 Mar	
Erich Spickermann	€ 20.50
05 Mar	

February

Super Type Foundry	-€ 150.00
27 Feb	

! a11y alert !

3.59:1

✗ AA 4.5:1

#74777A

Overview



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Super Type Foundry	-€ 150.00
27 Feb	

! a11y alert !

4.5:1

✓ AA 4.5:1

YT Ad Revenue

€ 2

12 Mar

**Earlier this month**

The Bakery Around the Corner

08 Mar

Erich Spickermann

05 Mar

**February**

Super Type Foundry

–€

27 Feb

font-weight: 400

letter-spacing: 0

YT Ad Revenue

€ 2

12 Mar

**Earlier this month**

The Bakery Around the Corner

08 Mar

Erich Spickermann

05 Mar

**February**

Super Type Foundry

–€

27 Feb

font-weight: 450  
letter-spacing: 1%

## Overview



# € 6,753.54

Current Balance

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05 Mar  
€ 20.50

### February

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27 Feb  
-€ 150.00

# Hierarchy by color contrast

1.77:1

✖ AA 4.5:1

## Overview



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The Grocery King

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13 Mar

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### Earlier this month

4.51:1

✓ AA 4.5:1

## Overview



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### Earlier this month

4.51:1

✓ AA 4.5:1

## Overview



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### Earlier this month

10.6:1

✓ AA 4.5:1

Overview



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font-weight: 400

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Earlier this month

Overview



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font-weight: 450

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Earlier this month

## Overview



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12 Mar

€ 2,235.43

### Earlier this month

! a11y alert !

1.14:1

Button container color  
against background color  
falls below 3:1

Overview



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13 Mar

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12 Mar

-€ 12.80

YT Ad Revenue

12 Mar

€ 2,235.43

Earlier this month

12.14:1

✓ AA

3.1:1

Overview



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13 Mar  
-€ 128.84

# Establish hierarchy by *using size and weight*

## **Body text**

15–17 pt

Regular

## **Labels**

12–15 pt

Medium

Increase spacing

## **Headings**

17–34 pt

SemiBold or stronger

Decrease spacing

# Highlight hierarchy by *using color*

**4.5:1**

color contrast  
for text

**3:1**

color contrast  
for containers

# Exercise #2

# #2

## Use size & weight to establish hierarchy

🕒 5 min

- **Primary information** should be larger and/or stronger  
17–34 px, Semi-Bold or stronger
- **Main body text** can remain  
15–17 px, Regular weight
- **Less important information** can be smaller  
12–15 px, maybe Medium weight

# Exercise #3

# #3

## Bonus: Use color to create highlights

🕒 5 min

- **Primary information** can have a striking color
- **Main body text** should have a calm color
- **Less important information** can have a less contrasting color
- **Bonus:** If you still have time, check text and button colors for accessibility by using the [Color Contrast Plugin](#)

Overview



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# Spacing

# Unclear relations

Groups are little obvious.

Overview

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27 Feb

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# Unclear relations

Groups are little obvious.

Overview

Q

12 px

€ 6,753.54

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€ 2,235.43

Earlier this month

The Bakery Around the Corner

08 Mar

–€ 3.20

Erich Spickermann

05 Mar

€ 20.50

February

Super Type Foundry

27 Feb

–€ 150.00

**Increase spacing**  
while setting a base unit.

**16 px**

Overview

€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

Send Money

Add Money

Earlier this week

The Grocery King

13 Mar

–€ 128.84

Cinema Paradiso Baden

12 Mar

–€ 12.80

YT Ad Revenue

12 Mar

€ 2,235.43

Earlier this month

The Bakery Around the Corner

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05 Mar

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February

Super Type Foundry

–€ 150.00

16 px

# Create connections

Set elements closer, that belong to one group.

Add space around groups to clearly distinguish them.

## Overview



€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

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Add Money

### Earlier this week

The Grocery King –€ 128.84

13 Mar

Cinema Paradiso Baden –€ 12.80

12 Mar

YT Ad Revenue € 2,235.43

12 Mar

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Super Type Foundry

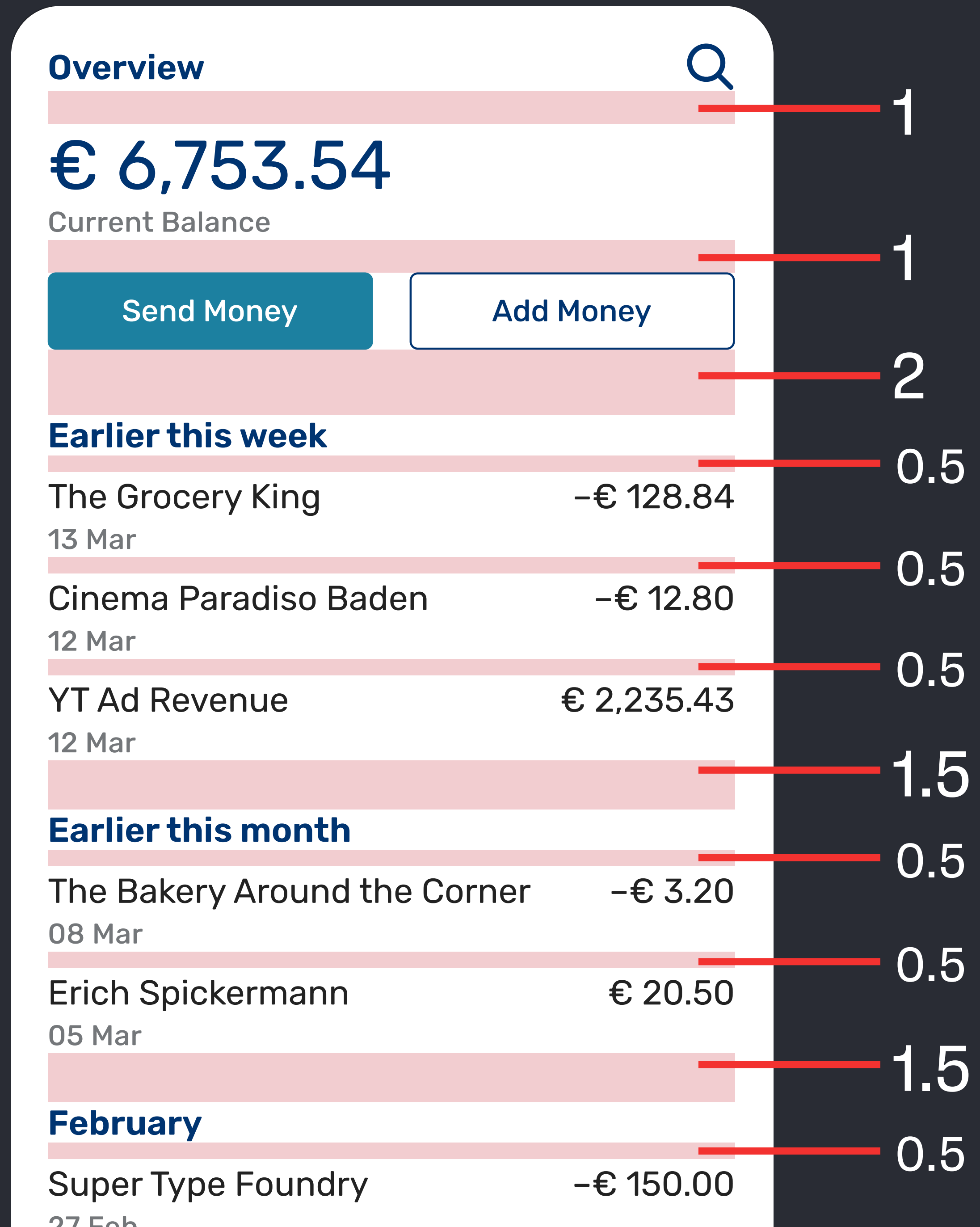
27 Feb

–€ 150.00

# Create connections

Spacing based on multiples or fractions of the base unit.

# 16 px = 1



€ 6,753.54

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12 Mar	
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05 Mar	

February

Super Type Foundry	–€ 150.00
27 Feb	

# Exercise #4

# #4

## Adjust spacing to amplify hierarchy

🕒 10 min

- **Define a base unit**  
like 16px
- **Set elements closer** that belong to one group.
- **Add space around groups** to clearly distinguish them.
- **Use fractions or multiples** of the base unit  
like 0.5 = 8 px   1.5 = 24 px   2 = 32 px

**Share your results**

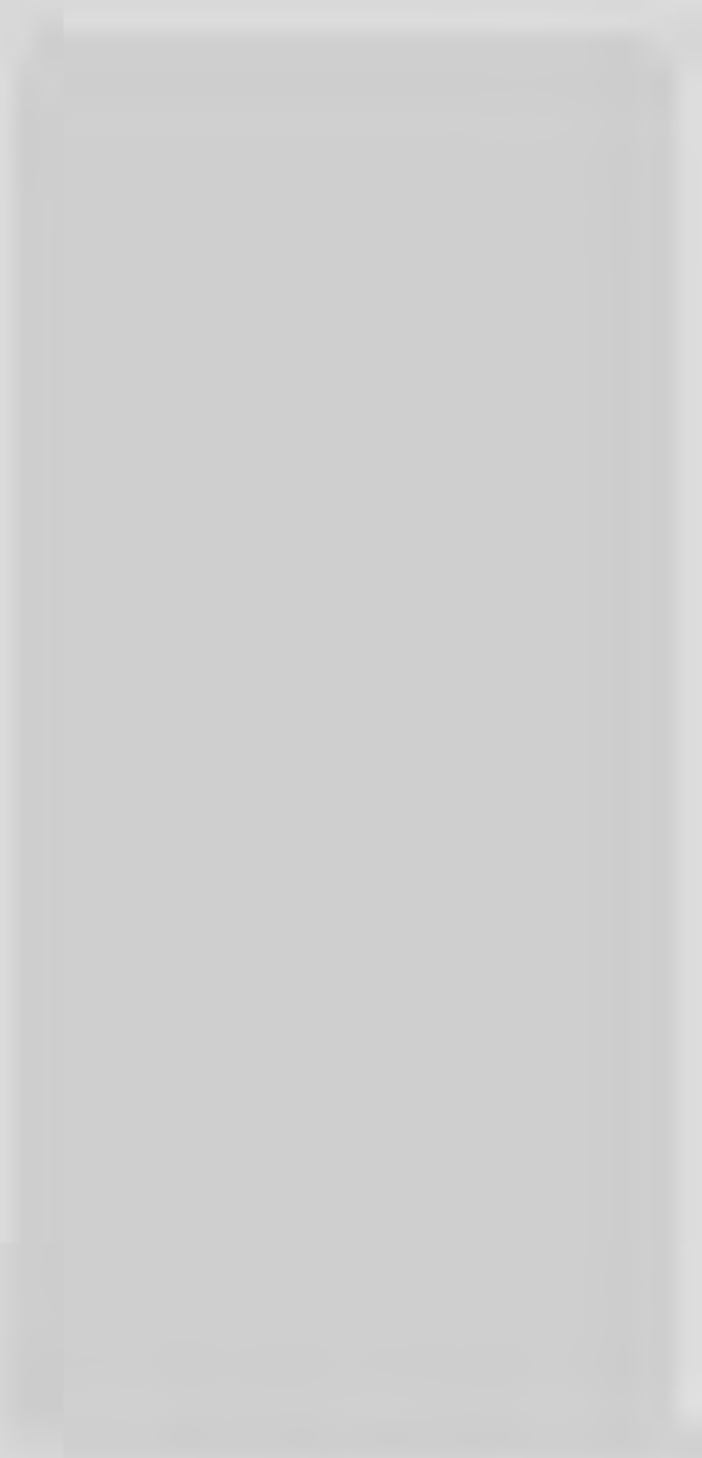
Paste your result here →



Original design



Oliver Schöndorfer



Your Name

# Final polish

## Overview



€ 6,753.54

Current Balance

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Add Money

### Earlier this week

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12 Mar

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The Bakery Around the Corner -€ 3.20

08 Mar

Erich Spickermann € 20.50

05 Mar

### February

Super Type Foundry -€ 150.00

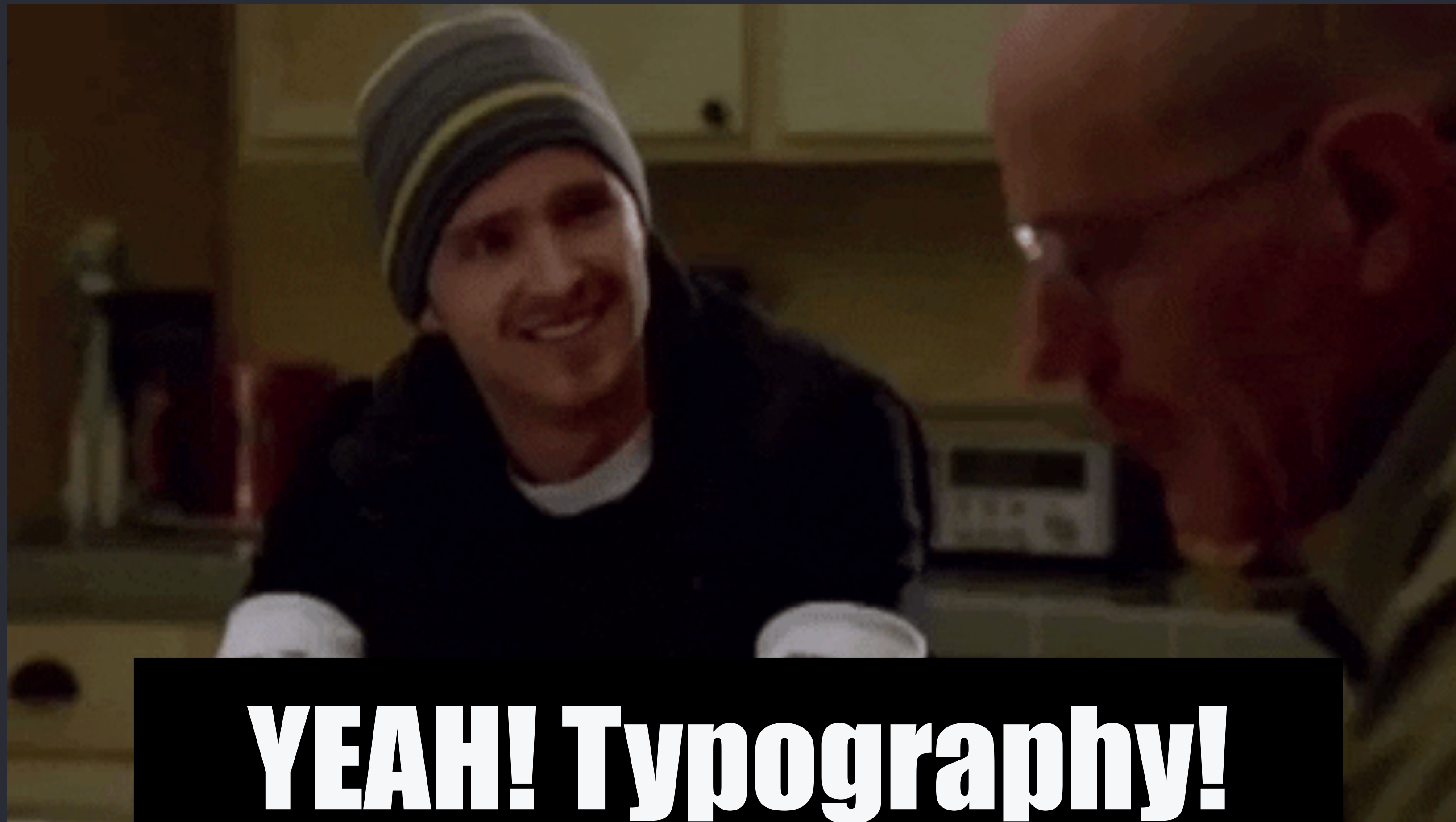
27 Feb

# Final polish

Overview	
<div>€ 6,753.54</div> <div>Current Balance</div>	
Send Money	Add Money
Earlier this week	
The Grocery King	-€ 128.84
13 Mar	
Cinema Paradiso Baden	-€ 12.80
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12 Mar	
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08 Mar	
Erich Spickermann	€ 20.50
05 Mar	
February	
Super Type Foundry	-€ 150.00
27 Feb	

Medium  
weight increased

Highlighted  
with bg color



**YEAH! Typography!**



**What was *the best thing*  
you have learned today?**

# Your Results

**How will your  
*next UI design* look like?**

# System Fonts

## Overview



€ 6,753.54  
Current Balance

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Add Money

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27 Feb  
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February

Super Type Foundry

27 Feb

–€ 150.00

Individual

Typefaces

# Clear Hierarchy

## Overview



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27 Feb

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February

Super Type Foundry -€ 150.00

27 Feb

Proper  
Spacing

**Your typographic adventure  
has only *just begun!***


# On YouTube

## Pimp my Type

YouTube <sup>AT</sup> Suchen

Startseite  
Shorts  
Abos  
Mediathek


**PIMP MY TYPE**  
*Learn to use the power of typography!*  
@glyph on Twitter


 **Pimp my Type**  
@PimpmyType  
3320 Abonnenten


Abonniert


ÜBERSICHT VIDEOS SHORTS LIVE PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY

Beliebte Videos ▶ Alle wiedergeben


 **Please, make that font size bigger**  
8:45  
What's the best font size? A guide for body text in...  
9553 Aufrufe • vor 1 Jahr

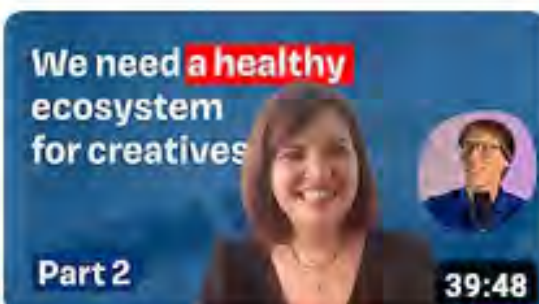
 **Open-Sans Why your font choice matters**  
7:33  
Stop using Open Sans! Why your font choice matters  
6598 Aufrufe • vor 2 Jahren


 **Three effective ways to combine typefaces**  
12:20  
Pairing Fonts – 3 effective ways to combine typefaces,...  
4249 Aufrufe • vor 1 Jahr


 **Stop the jumping time display in iOS**  
7:45  
Improving the Typography of the iOS time display?  
3101 Aufrufe • vor 2 Jahren

Videos ▶ Alle wiedergeben

 **You're a designer Set everything in Helvetica Bold**  
1:00  
Use Helvetica Bold for everything  
354 Aufrufe • vor 10 Tagen


 **We need a healthy ecosystem for creatives**  
Part 2 39:48  
Distributing indie fonts in a monopoly market with...  
175 Aufrufe • vor 1 Monat


 **We only had three good typefaces in Arabic**  
Part 1 24:35  
Arabic Type Design & Typography with Nadine...  
237 Aufrufe • vor 1 Monat


 **Typographer H4CK3R**  
1:00  
Monospace Font with Personality – Sligoil Micro...  
216 Aufrufe • vor 1 Monat


How to Choose a Typeface ▶ Alle wiedergeben

This miniseries guides you through the decisions you need to make when choosing a typeface. It covers why your font choice matters at all, what the different kinds of text are and how to pick a...

 **Open-Sans**

 **These questions I ask before picking a font...**

 **AA**

 **agall**

# On Font Friday

## Weekly Newsletter

Category

## Font Friday

Every Friday I recommend a typeface, write about for what digital applications it would not use it. Subscribe to the [Pimp my Type Newsletter](#) and get them directly to your inbox.

**Coline goes from calm  
to *wild and eccentric***

This is the body text set in Coline Premiere,  
by the typeface for this long reading text  
is understated. Its speciality should be that it

**Coline**

serif

**Figtree feels friendly,  
soft and clean**

This is the body text, ideally the typeface  
his long reading text is **understated**.  
speciality should be that it does not

**Figtree (free font)**

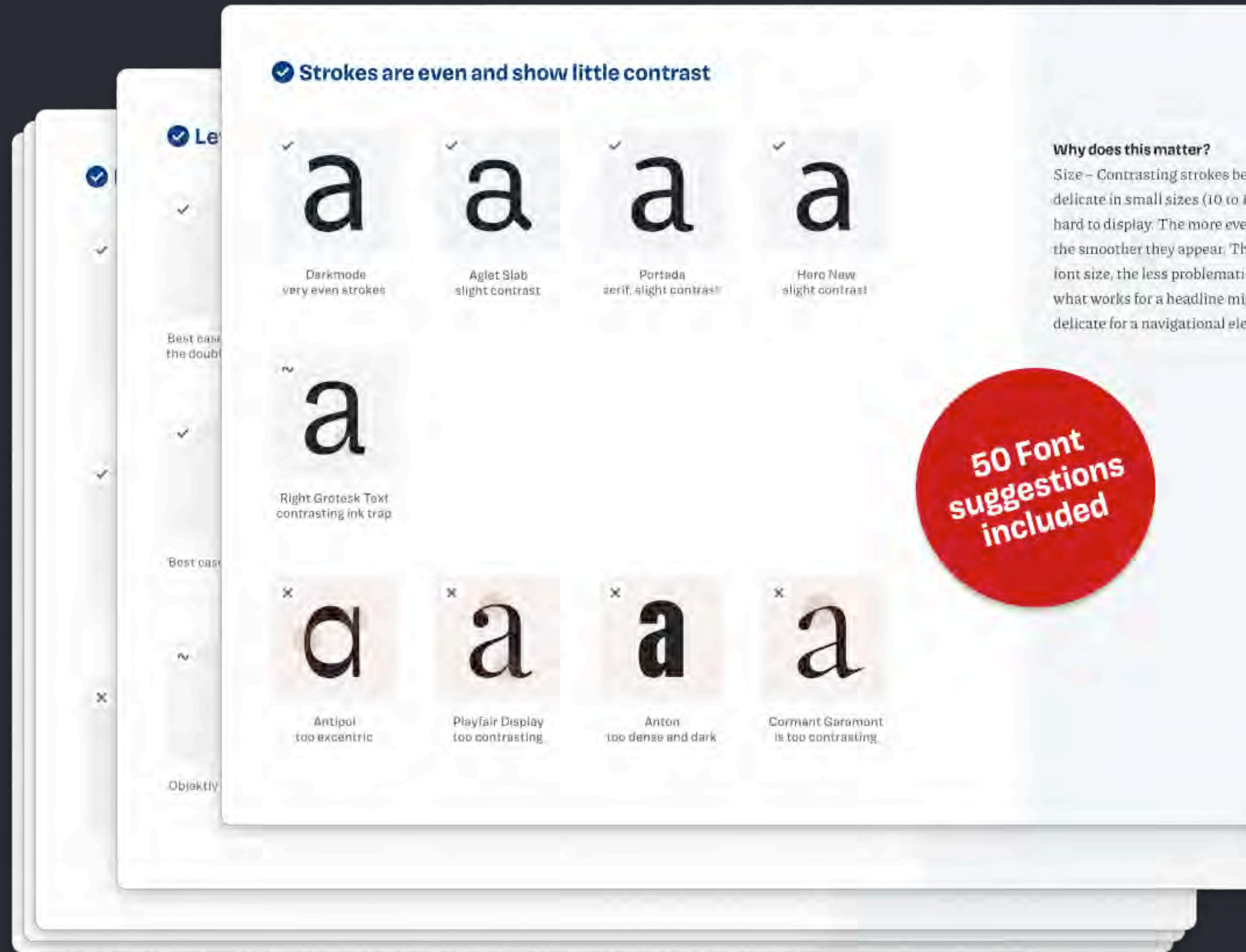
free font google fonts sans-serif

**Wremena feels like**

**NaN Holo can be narrow,**

# UI Fonts Checklist

Early access  
for only \$9,90



**Now go out there and  
pimp that type!**

Oliver Schöndorfer  [pimpmytype.com/uxc](https://pimpmytype.com/uxc)

 [pimpmytype](https://www.youtube.com/pimpmytype)

 [glyphe](https://twitter.com/glyphe)

 [pimp\\_my\\_type](https://www.instagram.com/pimp_my_type)