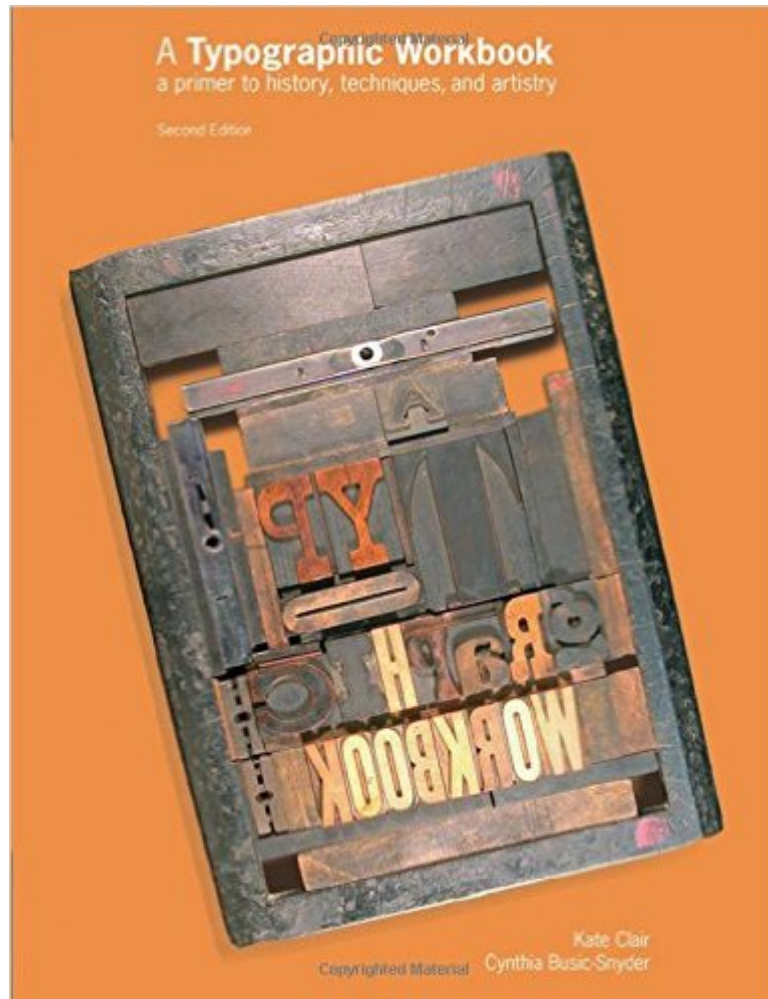


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# A Typographic Workbook: A Primer To History, Techniques, And Artistry



## Synopsis

Lavishly illustrated with more than 450 images, *A Typographic Workbook, Second Edition* explains the process successful designers use to select, space, and creatively integrate fonts. This essential text demonstrates the use of type as a dynamic and expressive communication tool. This edition provides new and updated coverage of a broad range of topics “from a logical, clear historical overview of the craft to the latest digital technologies. Known for its highly interactive format, this Second Edition continues to include helpful review questions and multiple-choice quizzes, as well as many new projects and skill-building exercises that help readers immediately apply what they have learned. *A Typographic Workbook, Second Edition* is a valuable professional resource for working designers and an indispensable training tool for graphic design students.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (39 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This is a 370-page college-level textbook about the use of printed letterforms, or what is more widely and commonly known as “typography.” It is surprisingly ambitious, in the sense that it makes an attempt to discuss an enormous range of issues, large and small, related to the history, theory, and practice of typographic design. The result, which interweaves an astonishing amount of text with hundreds (maybe thousands) of black-and-white illustrations (of mixed quality), is easily enough to fill two or three volumes. The first 270 pages consist of 20 chapters with such general headings as “Readability and Legibility,” “Typographic Hierarchy,” and “The Grid Structure.” Within each chapter, there are a dozen or more subsections on such topics as “Designing with Two Families of Type,” “Letterspacing and Its Effect on Readability,” and “Color Symbolism

Through Time.ã“ Intended to function also as a type specimen book, it ends with 75 pages of type samples, while, throughout the volume, the texts on the pages are purposely set in varying type styles, with annotations about typeface, size, and leading. How admirable to have put all this information under one cover. Yet, sadly, it suffers the critical flaw that, too often, the typography and layout of the book contradict its own principles. For example, nearly all the text is set in 8.5 point type with 12 point leading, regardless of typeface. While convenient for type comparisons, the effect of this is devastating for the reader, since some type styles can survive dense paragraphs at that setting, while others cannot.

I agree with many of the previous reviewers who have remarked on the poor writing style throughout this book! The historical sections are particularly awkward, as though the author did some research and simply tried to rephrase the content (usually unsuccessfully!). Though I was quite put-off by the writing style (or lack thereof), I did press on. What I found was a plethora of good information, useful side bar examples, and creative exercises. There is good content here, but it can be a lot of work to find and absorb it. I would love to see a new edition of this book, where the author could work more closely with an editor to develop a clear, stronger voice, resulting in a useable teaching tool. If such an edition were to be written, I would suggest a few improvements: 1. Reorganize the sections. The book doesn't flow well from chapter to chapter, and the reader feels directionless while proceeding through the book. Although the history is fascinating, it opens the book and goes on for quite some time. I found myself wanting to skip ahead. Also, it would make more sense to me to discuss the Five Historic Families of Type immediately after the Parts of a Character, rather than throwing the topics of 20th c. Typography and Changes in Printing Technology in the middle. 2. Consider eliminating the technique of switching typefaces every few pages. Yes, the reader does get a sense of which typefaces are more easily read than others at that size/leading, but is it really a good idea to tire and frustrate the reader while attempting to instruct? 3. Eliminate or re-work the introductions. If it is necessary to give an outline of upcoming topics, perhaps present it as a list rather than writing it out in as a paragraph?

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