

This is Aptos

Earlier this week my email text looked different. I was replying to another mail and I thought that the sender's branding might be so strong, that it forced their typeface on me, but then I noticed a different word in the typeface box: Aptos.

That is Microsoft's newest default typeface and apparently it is rolling out now. It was immediately set as default in our household's free Outlook email account.

A few days later it was also available in my tenant (Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, Excel) but it is not yet the default font.

A new typeface is always a big thing, as it has a large impact on how your texts look. Not only the "look-and-feel" changes, but often also the amount of space it uses. Your one-pager may no longer be a one-pager when you change type!

I can imagine this rounded, large-spaced letter will be easy to read from screen, but it is a bit too round for my liking.

Let's compare it to a few other Microsoft fonts before I make my final decision as to which one I prefer. I will use size 12 for all texts.

This is Segoe UI

This is a former Microsoft font, mostly used for web purposes. I have always liked this as it is minimal and clearly legible for me.

I am interested in typography, but I am definitely not a pro. It all started in my school days, when my dad (who created technical drawings for landscapes, buildings and the like) had a large collection of Mekanorma and Letraset dry transfer letters, which he used for various projects.



Example of a sheet with dry transfer letters.

He also had the Letraset and Mecanorma catalogues, displaying a dizzying array of types which were an immense source of joy and inspiration for me. Letters could look completely different from each other but it would still be obvious what letter they were! Amazing!

I mean, look at Paperclip:

[Paperclip Font : Fancy Groovy : pickafont.com](http://pickafont.com)

PAPERCLIP

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

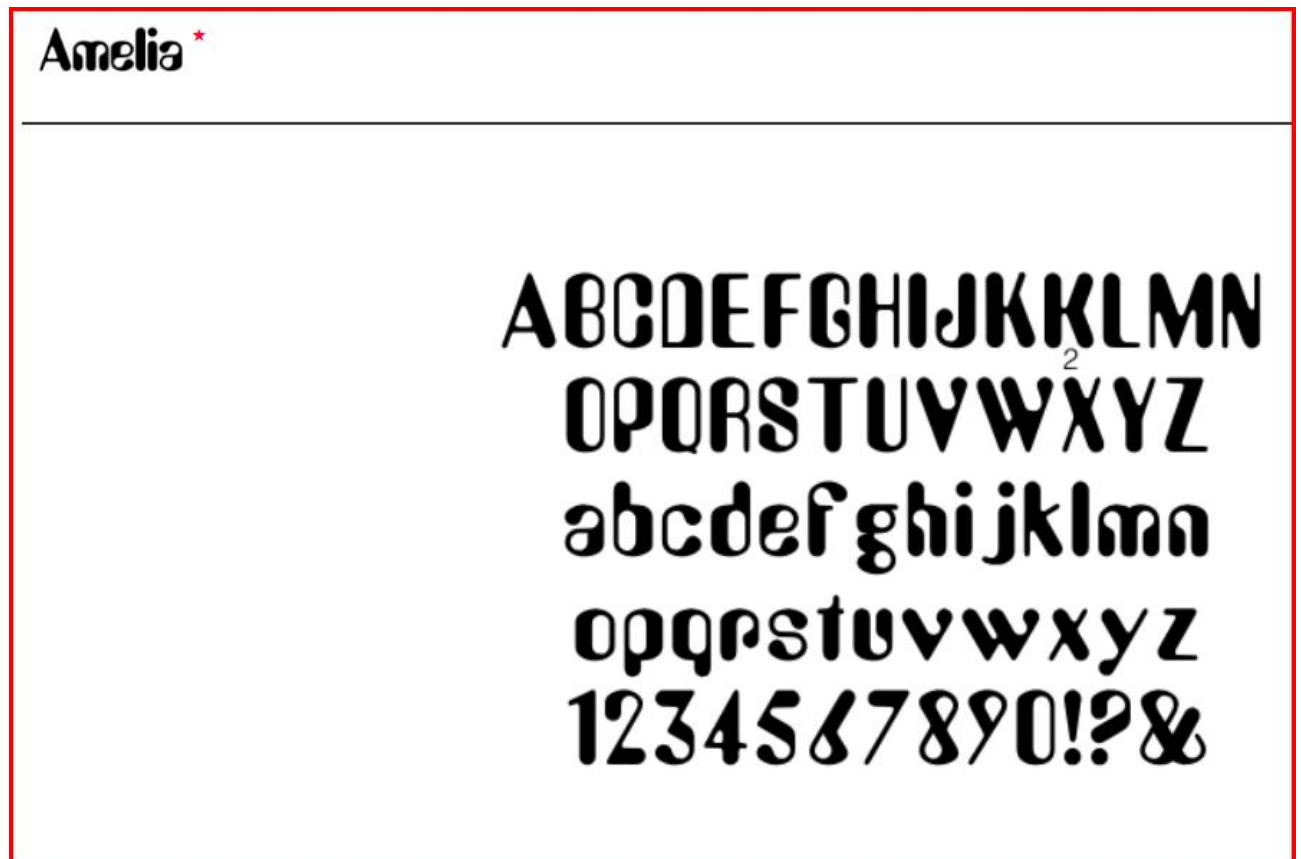
0123456789 . , ! ? - _ : ;

Or Arnold Böcklin: ([Arnold Böcklin | DAYLIGHT FONTS \(e-daylight.jp\)](https://www.daylight-fonts.com/arnold-boecklin/))

Arnold Böcklin*

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
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
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ! ? &

Or Amelia: ([Amelia | DAYLIGHT FONTS \(e-daylight.jp\)](#))



I seem to have a penchant for the Psychedelic type, which is an age thing. 😊
Many of my favourite records of that period used them! Check some of them out here:

[Psychedelic | Category | DAYLIGHT FONTS \(e-daylight.jp\)](#)

Amazing, huh?

But there are modern-day fun fonts too, look at this "Typefesse" for instance:

[Typefesse - VTF \(velvetyne.fr\)](#)



Typefesse : Claire-Obscure — 179px

IN PHYSICS, THE SHOWER-CURTAIN EFFECT IS THE PHENOMENON IN WHICH A SHOWER CURTAIN GETS BLOWN INWARD WITH A RUNNING SHOWER. THE PROBLEM OF THE CAUSE OF THIS EFFECT HAS BEEN FEATURED IN SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN MAGAZINE, WITH SEVERAL THEORIES GIVEN TO EXPLAIN THE PHENOMENON BUT NO DEFINITE CONCLUSION. AS A SECOND MEANING, THE FACT THAT NEARBY PHASE FRONT DISTORTIONS OF AN OPTICAL WAVE ARE MORE SEVERE THAN REMOTE DISTORTIONS OF THE SAME AMPLITUDE IS CALLED SHOWER-CURTAIN EFFECT.

Typefesse : Claire-Obscure — 30px

This is Calibri

This is the default until it will be replaced with Aptos. I am not a fan, it is a bit messy, especially in larger sizes, such as in PowerPoint.

Back to my interest in typography. One of the interesting uses of letters by my dad, was painting names on boats. He was quite famous in our circle for this, and many of my parents' boating friends asked him to paint the name on their boat.

He first created the full name on a large piece of thick paper, and cut out the letters, leaving some small strips to keep the inside of the "o", for instance, in place.

He then taped the paper on the surface-to-be-painted, and then first penciled in the name, using the cutting lines, then carefully filled the letters with paint.

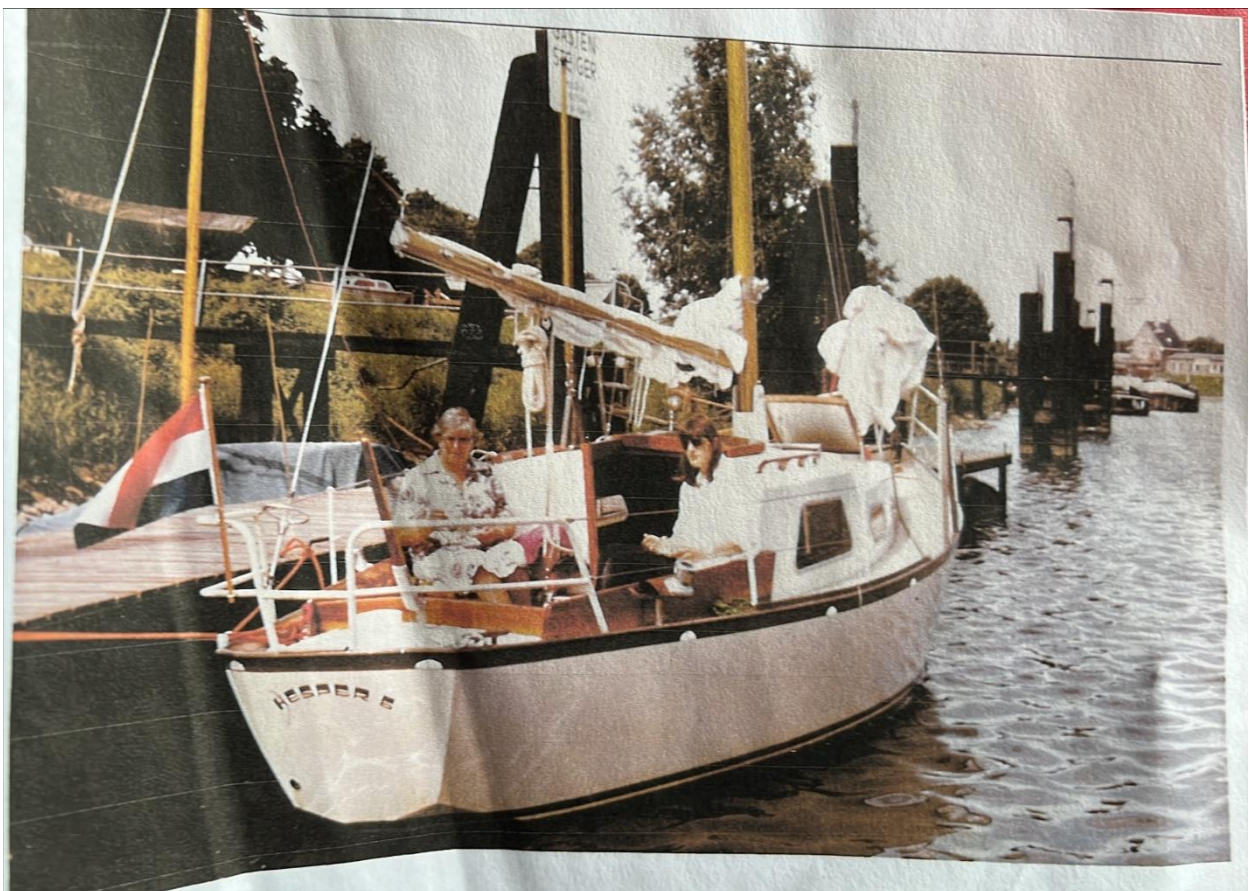
Of course you need a bit of a sturdy letter to do that, and he used Mecnorma's Jackson for most of this work. I still see it sometimes, on shops, for instance, and it immediately fills me with nostalgia.

JACKSON

**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
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ! ? €**

[Jackson in use - Fonts In Use](#)

Dad actually sent me a picture of one of our boats the other day, with the name Hesper 6 in Jackson. My mum and me are in the picture too, both looking as if we wanted to be somewhere else. (At that age, I wanted to stay home to listen to the top 40)



This is Arial

This is another former Microsoft letter. I am a fan. It is a little more dense than Segoe and looks solid and readable. I know it is a "variant" (or rip-off) of Helvetica. Did you ever do the test "So you think you can tell Arial from Helvetica?"

It is a fun quiz with brand logos. Well, I failed miserably, having no formal knowledge of the differences. Give it a try if you are interested.

[Ironic Sans: So you think you can tell Arial from Helvetica? Quiz](#)

This is Times New Roman

I think this is a letter used by the earlier versions of Microsoft and Windows. As I dislike most serif letters for online use, I do not like this one either. Even in 12 point it is rather small. It looks old fashioned, but not in a good way like the Psychedelic fonts. It is too formal, too stuffy, well, I simply do not like it! However, it has been a massive hit since its creation in 1932. It is easy to read and economic in space and print, apparently.