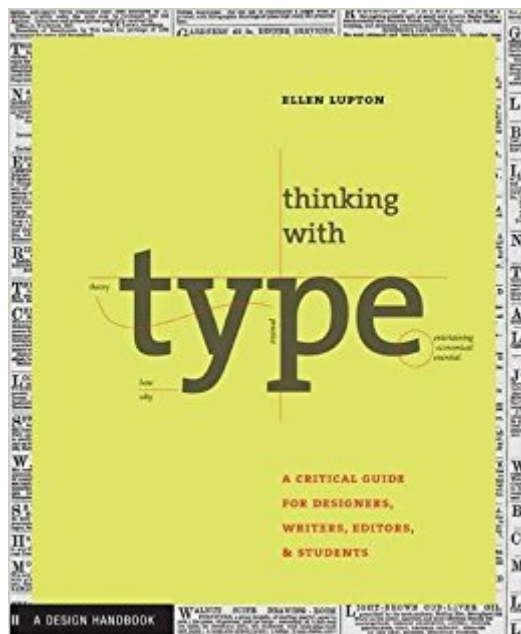


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# Thinking With Type: A Primer For Designers: A Critical Guide For Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students



## Synopsis

The organization of letters on a blank sheet -- or screen -- is the most basic challenge facing anyone who practices design. What type of font to use? How big? How should those letters, words, and paragraphs be aligned, spaced, ordered, shaped, and otherwise manipulated? In this groundbreaking new primer, leading design educator and historian Ellen Lupton provides clear and concise guidance for anyone learning or brushing up on their typographic skills. *Thinking with Type* is divided into three sections: letter, text, and grid. Each section begins with an easy-to-grasp essay that reviews historical, technological, and theoretical concepts, and is then followed by a set of practical exercises that bring the material covered to life. Sections conclude with examples of work by leading practitioners that demonstrate creative possibilities (along with some classic no-no's to avoid).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"...written with warmth and clarity...destined to become an essential part of many typographers' and designers' libraries." -- *Print*, April 2005  
"If you've ever wondered why you 'instinctively' buy one cake mix over the other, find out here." -- *Florida Inside Out*, April 2005  
"dense enough to cover all vital type subjects...condensed enough for easy referencing." -- *Step Inside Design*, Dec. 2004  
"...worthy of adding to your library; it's essential if you salivate when you look at well-designed and well-chosen type." -- *Technical Communication*, August 2005  
"If you've ever wondered why you 'instinctively' buy one cake mix over the other, find out here." -- *Florida Inside Out*, 4/2005  
Ellen Lupton, one of America's best-known design educators, is director of the design program at

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, as well as curator of contemporary design at Cooper-Hewitt in New York. The author of several books, Lupton... use(s) her latest, Thinking With Type as a primer for her students." -- Alan G. Brake --Azure, January 2005"Ellen Lupton, one of Americas best-known design educators, is director of the design program at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, as well as curator of contemporary design at Cooper-Hewitt in New York. The author of several books, Lupton... use(s) her latest, Thinking With Type as a primer for her students." -- Alan G. Brake (January, 2005) --Azure

"Worthy of adding to your library; it's essential if you salivate when you look at well-designed and well-chosen type." "Design isn't just about how things look, the answer to a design challenge is more about discovering why certain things work. In steering projects toward visual solutions that deliver clear messages, we have to look at the very building blocks of design. Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, - Students aims to get at the heart of this issue." -- Brian E. Young (March 2, 2009)

I bought this many many years ago when I started out being a designer. It was a good primer to start with, but I think there are too many archaic examples of what is discussed and not enough modern ones. There are three main topics discussed: Letter, Text, and Grid. These are three fundamental things every designer should know and take into consideration when completing a project. You first learn about Letter, a history of how fonts and types were first used to make physical books and their evolution into the digital font files we have today. You move on to Text, where you learn about how spacing them apart or together or in different arrangements will have a certain effect. Lastly, you learn about Grid, which is a section on how all your information is organized and can be organized on a physical or digital canvas. And as a bonus, the last few pages are an appendix of very useful information mostly about proofreading and using the right punctuations, and using standardized editing marks. I found this last part to be very helpful. This is a quick read with some introductory topics and lots of visual examples. Use the knowledge in this book as guidelines, and start creating your own content, today!

This book is amazing - from the eye-catching graphics to the wide range of fonts to the valuable information presented within the well-formatted pages. It begins with a wonderful summary of the history of type, analyzing how typography has changed and evolved throughout the years. Fonts from all throughout history are shown in the pages, visually showing those changes and providing

each section with a beautiful array of typography. It then moves on to the anatomy of letters, and teaches the basics of analyzing characters. Typographic theory takes over the rest of the book, and valuable information about the development of fonts and how to use them is presented. I thoroughly enjoyed this text, will definitely keep it close as a great resource, and would recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about typography!

If you're looking for an instructional guide to typography, check out *The Elements of Typographic Style* or *The Complete Manual of Typography*. After revisiting this book, I've upped it to 4 stars, realizing that while it doesn't serve as a typographical reference, it is thought-provoking. This book, while it does contain some practical dos and don'ts, is more useful for: seeing good examples of interesting typography; learning a bit of history about typefaces, layout, and grid; and for learning about how typographical grids and other techniques apply to web design. I agree with some other reviewers that the design and layout of the book at times is overwrought, and distracts from the content. This is most evident in the first chapter, Letters, which I found very difficult to get through. However, the second (Text) and third (Grid) chapters aren't laid out so busily, and are much stronger. I wouldn't recommend this as a first or only book on typography, but is worth reading after more complete, nuts-and-bolts volumes.

Awesome!

This is a great book that introduces typography in a simple, easy to understand way. Beginning with the history of typography, and going through pre-digital type, then going on into contemporary typography, this book offers a good resource for graphic designers and English majors alike. For the beginning graphic designer reading this review, I would definitely suggest this book before tackling some of the more in-depth typography books so that one can have a basis for understanding some of the more complicated concepts that will be presented in a lot of the other books.

To quote Ellen Lupton: "There is no playbook that assigns fixed meaning or function every typeface; each designer must confront the library of possibilities in light of a project's unique circumstance." Unfortunately, this seems to be true, and this book is no such playbook. The author provides a brief history of the trade, and a nice overview of some of the basics of type, but I was left wanting for more. The book is nicely illustrated, and still remains among one of the better ones on the subject, but there is room for improvement.

This is not a book of page canons, nor is it a book that will do your work for you. Rather it is a book that covers the fundamentals of what typography aims to be, and that is a living, breathing thing as opposed to a automate-able mechanical system.

Lots of great information on typography, history, and design

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