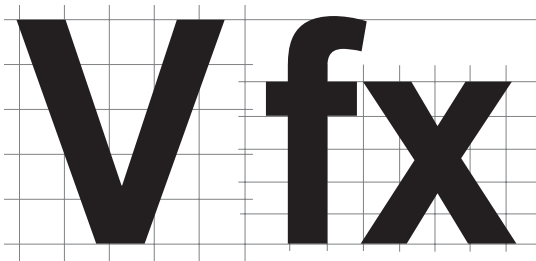


LEGIBILITY FACTORS

For easiest legibility at a distance, experience and research indicate that the width of a letter's vertical strokes should be about one-fifth its height. Horizontal strokes may be slightly thinner. These proportions apply equally to capital and lower-case letters, and are grouped into four areas: **Letterspacing, Perspective, Stacking and Line Spacing.**



Letterspacing.

The example demonstrates the importance of a reasonable amount of air between letters. Extremely close spacing can reduce legibility, even with a clean, gothic typeface. Notice how crowding can confuse the intention of the copy by causing certain letters to attach visually to adjacent letters, thus "clear morn" could be interpreted as "dear mom".

*clear
morn*

*clear
morn*

Perspective.

The legibility problem created by tight letterspacing is compounded when copy lines are viewed from an angle, which can occur in outdoor. Condensed typefaces start to resemble picket fences and horizontal strokes tend to appear thicker in relationship to the vertical strokes.

*clear
morn*

*clear
morn*

Line Spacing.

As in the case of letterspacing, adequate air space is necessary for maximum legibility. If a copy line is riding "piggyback" on the copy line below it, the interplay of descenders and ascenders creates confusion.

*piggy
back*

*piggy
back*

DESIGN TIPS: COLOUR



COMMON MISTAKES

One.

Crowding too many letters into a space tends to repel the eye and thus defeats the objective of getting type as large as possible.

OVERCROWDING

GIVE ME AIR

Two.

Too great a contrast between thick and thin elements leads to confusion.

CONFUSION

Three.

Strokes which are too fine do not utilize fully the basic shapes and fade into the background, becoming invisible at a distance.

invisible

Four.

Bulky typefaces become blobs at a distance, basic shapes cannot be distinguished and letters are not recognised.

OVERWEIGHT

Five.

Script and similar styles sacrifice the basic shapes for the decorative aspect. Individual letters, therefore, cannot be identified.

Illegibility

DISTANCE VS. COMPREHENSION

Comprehension of an outdoor advertising design depends not only on the style of type or lettering or on the combinations of colour used, but also upon how these elements work together, at a distance. Distance itself is a variable, which must be considered because the audience is in motion.

The size of type or lettering, therefore, is an important consideration in outdoor communication. To determine the proper size for specific considerations, we must first consider the demands.

A headline must be legible at any reasonable distance from close by to at least 400 feet. As illustrated below, a letter height of 20 inches is recommended. No letters should be less than 12 inches in height if we are to communicate a message effectively at a distance.

Letters 4 inches high are included simply to illustrate what happens to letters this high at a distance. This size lettering is often used in a mandatory phrase or identification.

