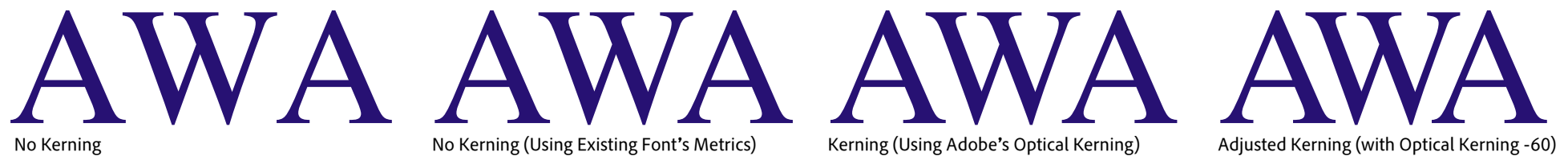
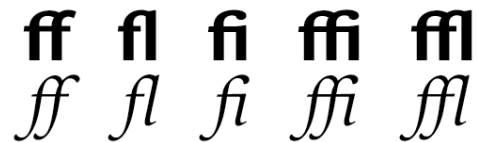


Kerning is spacing between characters. **Tracking** is overall word and letter spacing. **Leading** is space between lines. **Space-before** and **Space-after** are terms for the amount of space between paragraphs, headlines, etc.



An **em space** is a term derived from the width of the capital "M" on a metal character block used with early print presses.



These are the most common ligatures, ff, fl, fi, ffi and ffl. A ligature is not simply two letters arbitrarily glued together. The two letters are crafted into a single letter (technically speaking a single glyph). Certain letter combinations are simply crying out for ligatures.

f plus i ligature in Adobe Caslon. Let's take, for example the combination of "f + i": the letter "f" in both its lower-case and upper-case forms is top heavy; look at that overhang! In the example to your left, notice how the overhang of the "f" overlaps the "i" dot (tittle). Combining the "f" and "i" into a single glyph makes the "f" look that much more stable. It's not going to fall over, because it's using the "i" as a crutch. The overhang of the "f" (the terminal) also doubles as the dot of the "i". You could say that ligatures are natural

letter-friends. **Orphan**

With the invention of Metal Movable Type in the 15th century, ligatures flourished and were a great time saver when setting type. For example, instead of having to set an "f" and an "i", a single ligature block could be used instead. That may not seem like a great time saver, but when you're setting an entire book of 40,000 words in movable type, then it could certainly make a difference.

For those of you interested in the origin (etymology) of the word "ligature", it comes from the Latin ligatus, which basically means to tie or bind. And when you look at the above examples, you can see that ligatures are letters that have been bound or tied together (how happy they are about that, I have no idea).

So, the next time you're reading, be sure to look out for ligatures.

The Decline of the Ligature

So whatever happened to the ligature? Well, to cut a long story short, the modern-era of printing, the typewriter and Desk Top Publishing (DTP) were all nails in the ligature's coffin. Richard Wendorf,

in a 2005 lecture The Secret Life of Type, even suggests that the death of the ligature was brought about by a desire to reduce the number of type pieces, and was also influenced by the popular publisher John Bell (1745-1831), who abandoned ligatures; and is also said to be responsible for the death of the long S.

Interesting type fact!

The most common ligature is the "&" (ampersand). This was originally a combination of the letters "e" and "t", et, the Latin for "and". However, the ampersand is generally no longer considered to be a ligature — but that's how it started.

Widow

Leading is space between lines measured from bottom of baseline up in **Points**.

POINTS

12 pts = 1 pica
72 pts = 1 inch

PICAS

6 picas = 1 inch
1 pica = 12 pts

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