

Sans Forgetica

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Introducing Sans Forgetica

Sans Forgetica is a font that has been scientifically designed using principles of psychology to improve retention of written information. It was created by a multidisciplinary team of designers and researchers from RMIT's School of Design and its Behavioural Business Lab.

Download the font for free at
[sansforgetica.rmit](https://sansforgetica.rmit.edu.au)

Sans Forgetica

Character table

!	“	#	\$	%	&	‘	()
*	+	,	-	.	/	0	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	:	;
<	=	>	?	@	^	3	C	o
≡	π	G	∴	∑	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
{		}	~	ı	€	£	¤	¥
¡	§	¨	©	ª	«	¬	-	®
—	•	±	²	³	´	µ	¶	·
¸	¹	º	»					

Memory is the mother
of all wisdom.

– Aeschylus (c. 525–456 BC)

What's wrong with Helvetica?

Helvetica

Sans Forgetica

Historically, the story of font design has been governed by the technology of the day.

From the time when Johannes Gutenberg developed a method of movable type for his invention of the printing press in the 15th century, to the introduction of digitised typefaces in computer interfaces, typography has been determined as much by technological change as by the aesthetics of design.

Today, typographic expression has been unleashed. Digital formats allow us to think and craft beyond the physical restrictions of materials, while glossy, high-definition digital displays allow typographic forms to be straighter, smoother and more symmetrical than ever.

Never before has it been so easy to craft letterforms that bend to the will of our imaginations.

But at what cost?

Arial
Avenir

Research has shown that some of the products of these new tools and technologies – in particular the clean, smooth typefaces typically used in contemporary digital interfaces – may be less effective in helping the reader remember information.

When a piece of information is too easily and cleanly read, it can fail to engage our brains in the kind of deeper cognitive processing necessary for effective retention and recall.

Sans Forgetica is an attempt to address this somewhat ironic flaw of design. By disrupting the flow of individual letterforms, readers are subtly prompted to increase their focus on the text being communicated. Multiple tests undertaken by RMIT's Behavioural Business Lab have confirmed that the effect of this is to increase memory retention of the text in question.

We believe that Sans Forgetica is just one manifestation of a new way of thinking about design and the psychology of learning – and we're excited by the potential of what's to come.

Impact
FF Tisa



- Helvetica
- Times
- **Sans Forgetica**

Anatomy

Open counter

8° Backslant

Cap line

x-height

Base line

Disconnected bowl

Discontinuity through gapping

The science of Sans Forgetica



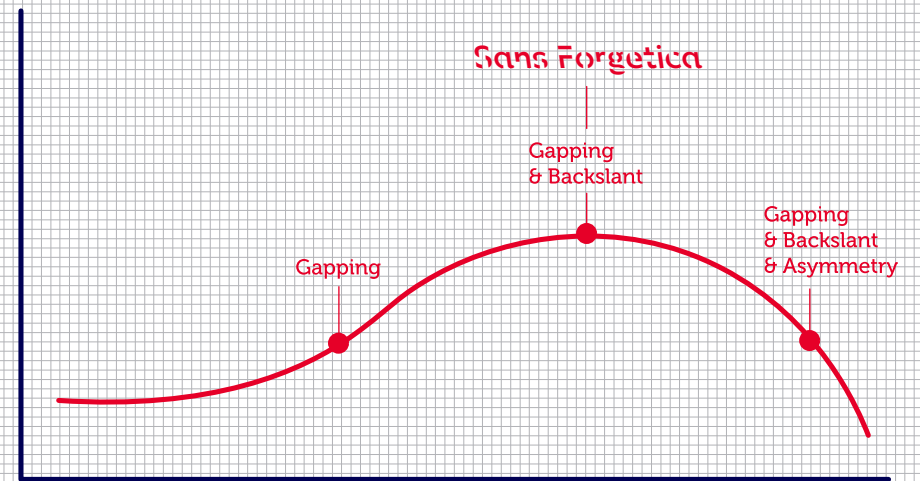
Sans Forgetica was designed under the scientific guidance of Dr Janneke Blijlevens and Dr Jo Peryman (nee Laban) from RMIT's Behavioural Business Lab.

The font works using principles of psychology, fused with type design, to create a condition known as 'desirable difficulty'. A desirable difficulty is an obstruction to a learning process that requires a considerable but desirable amount of effort, therefore improving (in Sans Forgetica's case) retention and recall of information.

Unlike more conventional fonts, Sans Forgetica's visual distinctiveness causes readers to dwell longer on each word, giving the brain more time to engage in deeper cognitive processing, thus enhancing retention of that information.

Learn more about the science behind Sans Forgetica at sansforgetica.rmit

Memorability



Breaking of perceptual rules

*This is a visualisation of how processing works, and not the quantified results of the experiment.

Gapping

Lamb

Gapping & Backslant

Sage

Gapping & Backslant & Asymmetry

BECK

Over two weeks, hundreds of participants took part in experiments designed to inform the design of Sans Forgetica.

The design

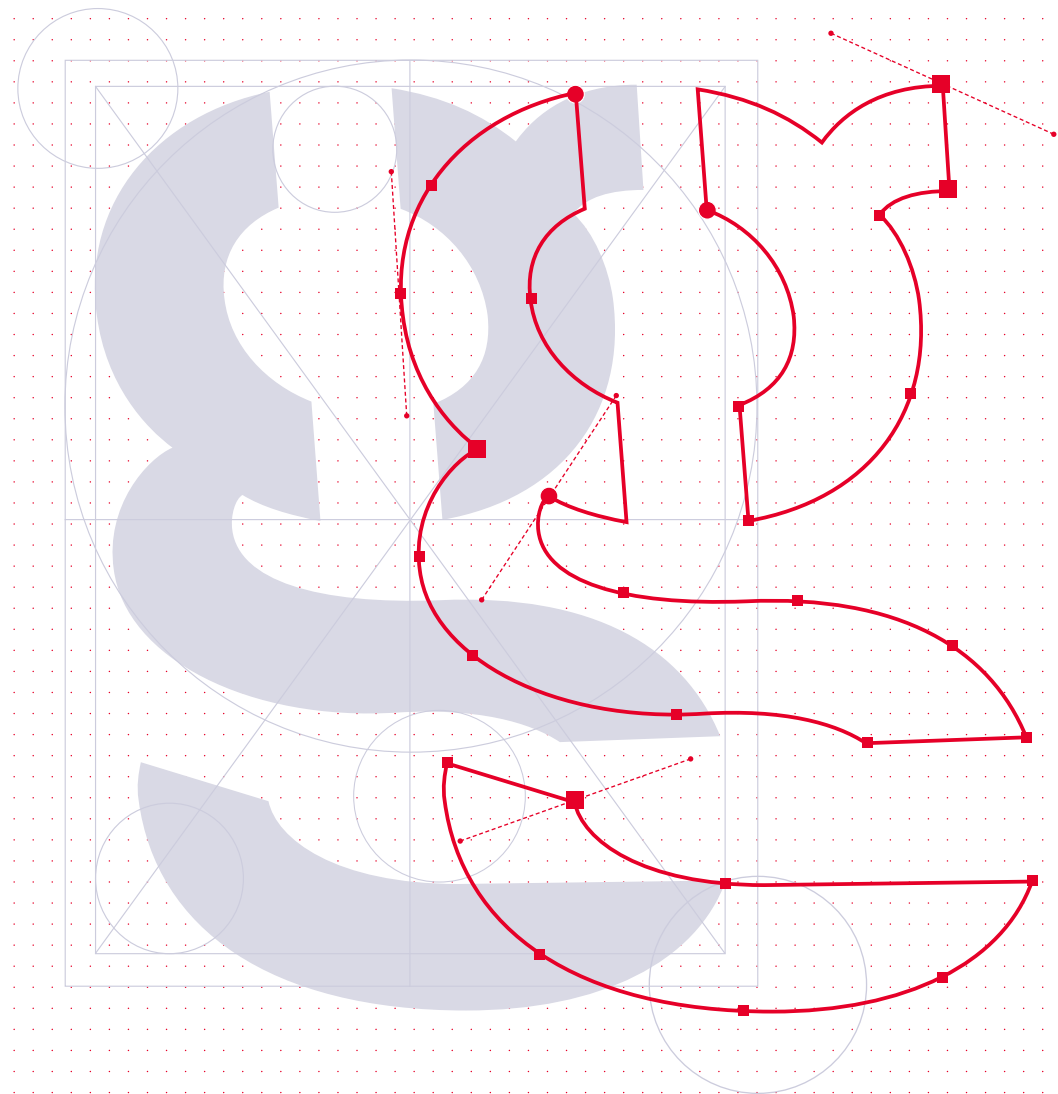
The face behind the type

The design of Sans Forgetica was led by RMIT lecturer of typography and world-renowned typographer Stephen Banham.

Working in collaboration with RMIT's Behavioural Business Lab, Stephen developed multiple typefaces with varying degrees of 'distinctiveness' built in. These subtle imperfections subvert many of the design principles normally associated with conventional typography and cause the reader to commit extra effort to their reading.

The typeface that showed the best effect on memory retention then became Sans Forgetica.

Learn more about the design process behind Sans Forgetica at sansforgetica.rmit



How to use Sans Forgetica

Sans Forgetica has been scientifically designed by RMIT University researchers to assist students in the lead-up to their exams.

The typeface download can be used by most programs across both Mac and PC formats. The font is best used as a highlight tool to convert key passages that users want to remember.

Sans Forgetica is also available as a Google Chrome browser extension, helping the user remember important information on websites. By activating the extension when viewing content in the browser and highlighting sections of copy, the relevant content is converted into Sans Forgetica.

To hear from the specialists behind Sans Forgetica's concept and creation, visit sansforgetica.rmit

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The font to remember

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